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Picture IGOR KUPCO



DAME VERA'S SING-ALONG

Forces sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn sent spirits soaring at the War and Peace Show last weekend, where she joined 120 veterans at the annual event at The Hop Farm in Paddock Wood.

Dame Vera burst into song and was joined by the veterans in a rousing chorus of wartime classic The White Cliffs of Dover on Saturday.

Thousands of families flocked to the military history event from last Wednesday to Sunday.

FULL STORY AND MORE PICTURES ON PAGE 5

■ BY ANNA WHITE

A GROUP of schoolchildren have returned home after they were quarantined in a Beijing hotel when one of them was diagnosed with swine flu.

The 16-year-old girl, a pupil at the New Line Learning Academy in Maidstone, was diagnosed with a mild case of H1N1 virus during the 12-day school trip to China.

The remaining 17 members of the NLL group, made up of year seven, nine and 11 students who are studying Mandarin and three teachers, were quarantined in their hotel while the girl was treated for the virus.

Headteacher Guy Hewett said the teenager has now fully recovered from the virus and was due home with the rest of the group on Monday.

He said: "The group was kept in quarantine for a day and are making their way home. The girl was diagnosed with a mild case of swine flu and was sitting up and chatting, she just had a bit of a headache.

"I'm pleased she has made a full recovery and that the group were still able to have a great experience and only miss a day of the trip. It's unfortunate that swine flu affected the trip, but it certainly did not ruin it.

"I kept in contact with the group and with the parents back home. I slept with my mobile phone next to me in case someone called and I would update the families of any news."

More than 600 students and teachers from England were on the trip organised by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

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Are soldiers given the protection they deserve, asks family

■ BY NICK AMES

THE family of a soldier killed in Afghanistan has called for politicians to do some soul-searching about whether everything is being done to protect British troops in the combat area.

Corporal Ivano Violino was based in Maidstone and died in September 2007.

He travelling with a 44-vehicle convoy, moving engineer equipment near the town of Gereshk in Helmand Province. He was killed when his truck hit a landmine.

After the inquest into his death his father-in-law, Paul Bearsby, said: "I ask politicians to do some soul-searching within their heart-of-hearts and tell me if it was their sons and daughters out there, would they feel confident that everything possible was being done to protect them."

There had been suggestions that air cover – had it been in place – could have prevented the tragedy.

But even that would not have saved him, according to the coroner at the hearing in Tunbridge Wells last week.

At the inquest into Cpl Violino's death, Christopher Sutton-Mattocks said such cover would not have



EXPLOSION: Cpl Ivano Violino was killed after his truck drove over a landmine

detected explosives under the soldier's truck.

His comments follow claims by Cpl Ivano's mother, Diane Bell, that extra cover could have saved her son.

The coroner chose not to record a verdict of unlawful killing over the death of the soldier, 29, who was originally from Salford.

He recorded that the father-of-two, who served with 20 Field Squadron, 36 Engineer Regiment, was killed in action on Her Majesty's Service.

After the hearing, Ms Bell said the verdict made her feel "even prouder" of her son, who was known as Sean.

He leaves behind his wife, Katey Anne, and seven-year-old twins, Ellie and Lewis, from a previous relationship.

Moving tribute to Captain Ben

THE mother and brother of a soldier killed in a helicopter crash in Afghanistan have paid tribute to the "fine, handsome, warm, intelligent, loving and hilarious young man".

A funeral for Captain Ben Babington-Browne, 27, of 22 Engineer Regiment, who died in Zabul Province on July 8, was held with full military honours in his hometown of Maidstone yesterday.

His mother Nina and brother

Daniel released a statement saying: "It is with deep sadness and tremendous pride that we receive all the lovely tributes about Ben, eulogising his wonderful academic and military achievements, all of which he undertook while managing to remain a lovely, kind, funny and loyal friend, colleague and troop commander."

*For coverage of the funeral log on to www.yourmaidstone.co.uk

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Drugs found during council house raid

RESIDENTS of a council property returned home to find their stash of drugs had been seized and they were being evicted after a police raid.

Officers executed a search warrant at a house in Willington Street, Shepway, in Maidstone, last Wednesday, and found cannabis plants, cultivating equipment and a "substantial" amount of amphetamine.

The raid was held when the council tenants were known to be out, so they didn't have a chance to try and hide the drugs.

Maidstone council are now to serve them with an eviction notice.

Anyone suffering similar problems should call 01622 604391.

Charity cyclists to put feet down at Le Mans

A TEAM of cyclists will be pedalling from Maidstone to Le Mans this autumn to raise money for charities chosen by a colleague with cancer.

PC Linda Gillette, who is based in Maidstone, was diagnosed in 2007 and colleagues PCs Duncan Pallet, Dave Taft and Stuart Champion will take on the mammoth 300-mile journey in September to raise funds for The Heart of Kent Hospice in Aylesford and Macmillan cancer nurses.

Sponsorship can be made at www.just-giving.com/maidstonetolemans or sent to M2LM c/o Dave Taft, Police Station, Palace Avenue, Maidstone.

Cheques should be made payable to Heart of Kent Hospice.

French pilot accused of smuggling illegals

A FRENCH man has been accused of trying to smuggle illegal immigrants into Kent using a light aircraft.

Eric Adrien Laou-Hep, 39, appeared at Maidstone Magistrates Court on Monday, charged with assisting illegal entry into the UK.

After a brief hearing he was remanded in custody to appear at a crown court at a date yet to fixed.

Kent Police were called to Laddingford Airfield near Maidstone on Saturday after a light aircraft landed without permission.

Seven foreign nationals were detained and have been referred to the UK Border Agency.

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River Festival 'best ever'

■ BY ANNA WHITE

THOUSANDS of families flocked to the banks of the River Medway at the weekend to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Maidstone's River Festival.

Organisers of the annual event marked the landmark anniversary by recreating the first ever River Festival held in 1980.

The Eighties theme proved a hit with the community and attracted 270 boats – the best turnout the event has ever received.

Chairman David Knight said: "The whole event was fantastic, the weather was great and it was very well attended, it was the best we have ever had."

"The bands were brilliant and it was the first time we had put a stage in Whatman Park and that went down really well and was well supported."

Illuminated

The weekend began on Friday evening and continued all day Saturday with attractions taking place throughout, including the traditional raft race, family fun fair, illuminated boat parade, and performances from theatre and dance groups.

A special performance was also given by Michael Jackson impersonator Navi, who performed some of the late King of Pop's greatest hits.

Mr Knight said: "The Michael Jackson tribute was absolutely brilliant and really pulled in the crowds, he was meant to do two performances but it was going so well that it turned into one longer show."

To tie-in with the theme people were asked to decorate their boats in a 1980s style and Mr Knight said the committee were impressed with the amount of effort the teams put in.

He said: "We had a complete mix of entries



and they were all great, we had all sorts. We are really grateful to the amount of effort everyone put in.

"The winning boat was called Strawberry, which the team had turned into a space shuttle. The runners-up were the White Tiger



boat team which dressed up as Queen, which was hilarious."

This year was extra momentous for Mr Knight as he celebrated his final River Festival as chairman after 14 years in charge.

He said: "It was definitely nice to go out



DOWN BY THE RIVER: The young, the old and the eccentric gathered by the Medway in the town centre to enjoy the 30th Maidstone River Festival last weekend

with a bang and I am looking forward to coming back next year to enjoy it."

Fellow committee member and Maidstone councillor David Naghi, who hopes to replace Mr Knight, said: "The Maidstone community and Maidstone council should be grateful to the hard work that David Knight has done during the past 14 years."

"He has done fantastic things with the River Festival and I am sad to see him leave but I dearly hope he will come back and join us on the committee next year."

Classmates and teachers quarantined

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Department for Children, Schools and Families, the British Council and Hanban in China.

Nine British pupils and nine US teenagers on the trip have been diagnosed with swine flu in Beijing and more than 100 of their classmates and teachers were quarantined.

During the trip the students visited Beijing for a four-day cultural programme and were able to watch a total eclipse.

Collection points

Latest figures for swine flu in Kent show just over 50 cases in every 100,000 people, or one in 2,000.

The rate of people reporting flu-like symptoms to their GP within the West Kent Primary Care Trust was 51 per every 100,000 people.

That compares to 56 people in the areas covered by the Eastern and Coastal Kent Primary Care Trust and around 50 people in Medway.

The UK average is 87 cases of flu-like illness within every 100,000 people.

Forty anti-viral collection points have now been set up in the west of the county as health bosses try to contain the spread of the flu.

Joanna having an absolutely fabulous time on Nepal trip

GURKHA rights campaigner and actress Joanna Lumley was mobbed on arrival in Nepal for what was intended to be a low profile visit.

Such was the good feeling and gratitude towards the actress that her imminent arrival in Kathmandu became the main event across the country.

She was accompanied by Shepway councillor and Liberal Democrat parliamentary candidate for Maidstone Peter Carroll.

He had also been a major campaigner during the successful drive to allow all former Gurkhas the right to settle in Britain.

"We're so excited to meet her, she's been so good to us," said Sorala Thapa, 42, wife of a former Gurkha soldier who was one of hundreds of Nepalis who welcomed Joanna.

More than 40 Gurkha wives, all wearing traditional green saris bearing the Gurkha emblem of two

crossed Khukuri knives were at Kathmandu Airport.

As they waited for Ms Lumley's plane to touch down, they handed out placards bearing the slogans "daughter of Nepal", "goddess" and "thank you".

Prem Rai, chairman of the United British Gurkha Ex-Servicemen Association Nepal, said: "Gurkha wives and Gurkha widows are especially grateful to Joanna."

"They can now qualify for British settlement visas."

As Joanna emerged from the terminal building with Mr Carroll she looked delighted to see the crowds waiting to meet her.

Leaders of the Gurkha ex-servicemen organisations draped orange garlands and traditional white khata scarves – usually given as a token of love – around her shoulders.

"I'm absolutely thrilled, it's extremely sweet and warm," said Joanna.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Railway bridge inspected after lorry crashes into it

MOTORISTS were told to avoid the A20 at Harrietsham after a lorry collided with a railway bridge and overturned.

The articulated lorry hit the railway bridge near to the junction of Church Road, at about 3.30pm on Monday afternoon.

No-one was injured, but police were forced to close the road to clear the lorry's contents of food and recover the vehicle.

Network Rail engineers were called out to assess the damage caused to the bridge.

Supermarket pledges its support for deaf charity

A CHARITY has launched a partnership with a supermarket in a bid to boost funds.

Kent deaf charity Hi Kent has joined forces with Sainsbury's in Romney Place, Maidstone. Staff at the superstore have now pledged to support the charity over the next 12 months, organising fundraising events and giving their time to volunteer for free.

Hi Kent is based in Brewer Street, Maidstone, and works with the local deaf and hard of hearing community.

Employers left pig sick by staff hit by killer virus

A PRIVATE health centre is to offer swine flu testing after dozens of staff had problems convincing their employers they have the killer virus.

Companies are becoming increasingly suspicious of those who take sickies after claiming to have the bug.

Maidstone Health, in Church Street, Maidstone, has seen an influx of people wanting tests to be able to take time off.

Call 01622 672000 for more details.

Kind-hearted boss sees war vets on their way

A COACH company supplied free transport for Normandy veterans in Kent to allow them to make their annual trip to York.

George Batts, from Maidstone, secretary of the South East branch of the Normandy Veterans Association, contacted Kings Ferry Limited, in Gillingham, for help to provide a coach for the trip due to lack of funds.

Ian Fraser, the company's operations director, offered them a 49-seat executive coach for their trip free of charge.

24 officers have been caught speeding in last three years Speed cameras show no-one is above the law



SNAPPED: Cameras caught on-duty cops speeding

EXCLUSIVE

BY SIMON ROBINSON

MORE than 20 petrolhead police officers have fallen foul of the county's eagle-eyed network of speed cameras in the past three years, it has emerged.

Figures released by Kent Police in response to a Freedom of Information request from KOS Media show 24 officers have received fixed penalty notices for exceeding the speed limit since 2007.

Nearly half of these notices were issued while the officer was on duty. On a further four cases it is 'not known' if the officer was on duty or not.

The law-breaking officers range in rank from PC to inspector and serve at forces across Kent, including Mid Kent and Force HQ in Maidstone.

Four officers from the Mid Kent division – which includes Maidstone and Swale – were fined for speeding in the last two years.

Two PCs were caught breaking the speed limit while on duty in May, 2007, then a sergeant was nabbed in October of that year,

before a PC was caught in April this year speeding while off duty. Eight officers who work at the Force HQ in Sutton Road, Maidstone, were issued with fixed penalty notices during the same period.

This included two PCs on duty in October, 2007, three PCs and two inspectors in February this year, who were all off duty, and a PC in May this year, who was also off duty.

Overzealous

Assistant Chief Constable Andy Adams said the true number of speeding officers was likely to be higher, as police regulations requiring officers to report the receipt of fixed penalty notices only came into effect last December.

He added: "It is important to recognise that where an officer with Kent police cannot provide a lawful reason for activating a safety

camera, he or she will be issued with a fixed penalty notice or court summons.

"Our Kent Standard sets out the service and standards the public can expect from Kent police. Kent police has vigorous checks and balances to ensure officers drive lawfully. When they don't they face the same penalties as anyone else. No police officer is above the law."

A spokesman for Speedcameras.org said the figures supported their call for speed cameras to be discontinued.

He said: "It's of no surprise to learn that police officers also exceed the speed limit, just like the other two million ordinary members of the public who get fined each year."

"It proves that even officers are just as likely to fall foul of the overzealous placement of speed cameras and mobile traps that line our streets and motorways."

"If these professional upholders of law can wander above the speed limit then what hope do the rest of us have?"

"Speed limits should not be policed in such a cold, robotic fashion."

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Volunteers needed to crew boat

A CHARITY that provides boat trips for disabled and disadvantaged people is appealing for more volunteers to come forward.

The Kingfisher Medway Trust is based in Wateringbury and has a boat – The Kingfisher – which cruises between Yalding and East Farleigh.

Run by a committee, the charity can only operate thanks to a team of 26 volunteer skippers and helpers, but organisers are always keen for more people to offer their time.

Spokesman Clive Carden said: "Each trip requires three crew and a skipper to operate the boat. At present we can select from 26 crew and 12 skippers, but are always looking for new recruits."

"Volunteers should be reasonably fit without serious health problems, consent to a CRB check and undergo 'on the job' training to familiarise themselves with the boat and its operation."

"In return helpers get a day out on the river with like-minded people."

The charity was set up in 2004, and after years of fundraising, got its own boat in 2007.

Crews now take groups of 12 out between May and September, including those from residential homes, Alzheimer's associations and people with learning difficulties and mental health problems.

If you would like to take a trip on the Kingfisher or would like to volunteer call 01622 872182.

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THAT'S THE SPIRIT: Visitors from around the globe attended the annual War and Peace Show at Paddock Wood where Forces sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn (centre) joined up with ex soldiers to enjoy the world's biggest military history event

Impromptu sing-along brings wartime memories back at War and Peace Show

■ BY ANNA WHITE

MORE than 100 war veterans were joined by Forces sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn for an unexpected sing-along at the annual War and Peace Show.

Thousands of people from across the world arrived at the annual show, held at the Paddock Wood attraction, to see 120 Arnhem and Normandy war heroes arrive in 50 London black cabs on Saturday.

The veterans were the guests of honour at this year's War and Peace Show – which ran from last Wednesday to Sunday and is regarded as the biggest military history event in the world.

After arriving in style the veterans were joined by war-time favourite Dame Vera Lynn – who is nicknamed the Forces sweetheart for her morale-boosting hits during the Second World War.

Peter Bull, owner of the Hop Farm Family Park, said: "The event was attended by Dame Vera Lynn who arrived at The Hop Farm in General Montgomery's elegant silver Wraith Rolls Royce.

"Dame Vera and the veterans, who had travelled from all over the country to be at the show for a reunion, broke out in an impromptu performance of White Cliffs of Dover to much applause."

The visitors to the five-day event were able to see performances of jazz and jive dancing, take helicopter and tank rides, and meet spe-



cial guests including Buck Compton, Don Malarky and Earl McClung, whose exploits inspired the hit TV drama Band of Brothers.

Two of General Montgomery's personal Rolls Royce cars, including the one Dame Vera arrived in, were on show at the event, as well as rare military vehicles such as tanks, armoured vehicles and cars.

Mr Bull added: "This year's show was another phenomenal success."

"The 2009 line-up was packed with a host of brand new events and top of the bill was a battle of the skies between a Messerschmitt and Spitfire plane.

"There was also music from the Glenn Miller tribute band, cookery demonstrations featuring food traditionally made in the 1940s and fascinating living history areas depicting scenes of what life was like in the trenches. Next year's War and Peace will celebrate the 65th anniversary of the end of the Second World War."

The War and Peace Show was set up to commemorate the courage and selflessness of those who fought in the war, and it celebrates the spirit of hope and dogged determination that kept a nation going throughout it.

Petrol bomber causes £36,000 of damage in double attack on firm

POLICE are hunting a pyromaniac who fire-bombed a haulage company twice in one week.

More than £36,000 of damage was caused when the arsonist broke into Ardula's premises in Laddingford and Chatham and hurled petrol bombs inside two vehicles.

Company owner Martin Dace – who is offering a £5,000 reward to catch the culprit – said he accepted someone had a vendetta against the firm, though had no idea who it could be or why they would target him.

The first attack happened in the company's lorry park in Gravelly Ways, Laddingford, on July 2, followed by another attack in the company's other yard in Street End Road, Chatham, exactly a week later.

The first bomb was thrown inside the cab of one of Ardula's HGVs between 11pm and 12.20am, completely destroying it and damag-



DESTROYED: Ardula's premises where attacked twice

ing four other lorries. The second was thrown into the cab of a Caterpillar bulldozer between 5pm on July 9 and 6.45am the following day.

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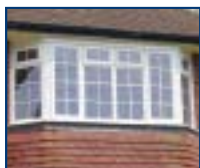
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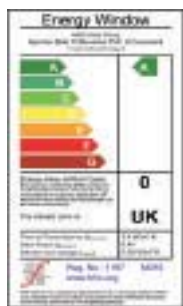
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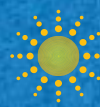
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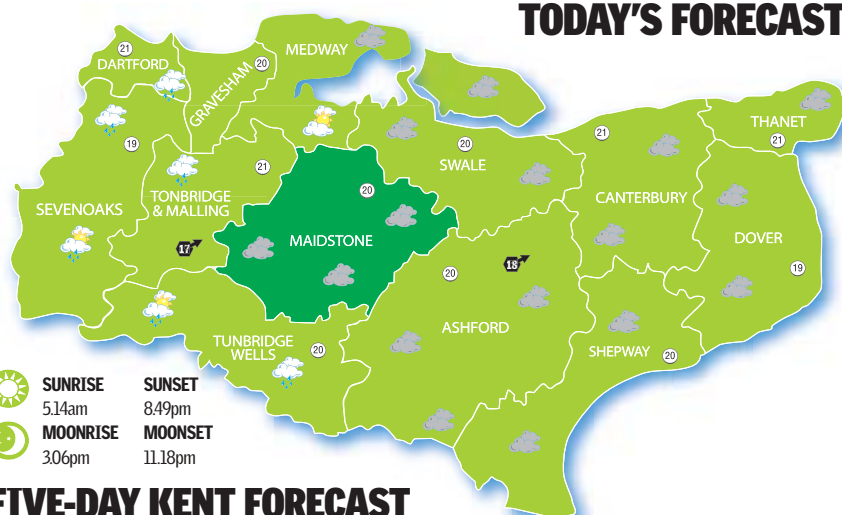
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	Sunday	11:05am	4.9m
Dover	Saturday	8:26am	5.3m
	Sunday	9:34am	5.5m
Dungeness	Saturday	8:06am	5.9m
	Sunday	9:11am	6.0m
Ramsgate	Saturday	8:56am	4.0m
	Sunday	10:04am	4.2m
Sheerness	Saturday	9:37am	4.7m
	Sunday	10:53am	4.8m
Whitstable	Saturday	9:34am	4.4m
	Sunday	10:51am	4.5m

AROUND THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Amsterdam	21°C	Madrid	34°C
Athens	31°C	New York	28°C
Barcelona	29°C	Paris	17°C
Beijing	28°C	Rome	30°C
Bombay	30°C	Sydney	16°C
Cape Town	25°C	Tenerife	31°C
Cardiff	16°C	Tokyo	29°C
Gibraltar	30°C	Vancouver	24°C
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Las Palmas	28°C	Wellington	8°C

FIVE-DAY KENT FORECAST

	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon		Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Ashford	20°C	20°C	19°C	20°C	21°C	Gravesend	23°C	21°C	21°C	21°C	22°C
Canterbury	21°C	21°C	20°C	21°C	22°C	Maidstone	20°C	20°C	20°C	21°C	22°C
Chatham	21°C	20°C	20°C	19°C	20°C	Ramsgate	21°C	21°C	20°C	21°C	22°C
Dartford	23°C	21°C	21°C	21°C	22°C	Rochester	21°C	20°C	20°C	19°C	20°C
Dover	18°C	19°C	19°C	19°C	20°C	Sevenoaks	19°C	19°C	18°C	19°C	20°C
Faversham	21°C	20°C	20°C	19°C	20°C	Sittingbourne	21°C	20°C	20°C	19°C	20°C
Folkestone	18°C	19°C	19°C	19°C	20°C	Tonbridge	20°C	20°C	19°C	20°C	21°C
Gillingham	21°C	20°C	20°C	19°C	20°C	Tun Wells	20°C	20°C	19°C	20°C	21°C



Former soap star joins Gladiator for panto

FORMER EastEnders star Aaron Sidwell is to star in Maidstone's Christmas panto.

The 20-year-old actor, who played troubled Steven Beale in EastEnders until May last year, will take the lead role of Prince Charming in the winter production at the Hazlitt Arts Centre.

Aaron, who grew up in Kingswood, near Maidstone, landed the role of Ian Beale's long-lost son in September 2007, and ended up stalking his dad, shooting Ian's wife Jane and being admitted to a psychiatric hospital where he tried to kill himself.

Hopefully there will be slightly less macabre drama in the panto, which also stars Sky1 Gladiator Doom and Holly Matthews from Waterloo Road and Byker Grove.

It will be the second time the Hazlitt Arts Centre and pantomime producers New World Productions have teamed up.

Company director Gary Telfer said: "We are delighted to return for what promises to be our most spectacular pantomime to date."

The panto runs from December 5 until January 10. All tickets bought before October 1 will get £1 off.

For more information call the Hazlitt Arts Centre box office on 01622 758611 or log on to www.hazlittartscentre.co.uk

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QUESTION & ANSWER

HESTER PHILLIPS



Q What is the best way to make your garden as friendly as possible for birds and animals?

A I always tell people they can do a lot of good just by being a bit lazy. If you leave some patches of grass to grow long or let piles of leaves collect, you'll attract insects, which provides food for birds and other wildlife.

If you relish a spot of gardening, trees like birch and rowan, or shrubs like pyracantha or hawthorn are good. Even some non-native flowers work well – buddleias and sedum attract butterflies. Plant one and you'll be able to measure its success instantly – sit back and watch as the butterflies flock to your handiwork.

Q What are the most common creatures that can be spotted in gardens in Kent?

A It can really depend on the garden itself – the more 'wildlife-friendly' features you've got, the more species you're likely to see. Kent does pretty well for starlings and house sparrows, although numbers are nothing like they used to be. Kent has also seen more great tits in recent years, and more greenfinches too.

At this time of year, also look out for hedgehogs feeding on worms as dusk falls and for butterflies like common blues and large whites.

Q And what are the most exotic?

A Birds like swifts and house martins might not seem exotic but they've made incredible journeys from Africa to get here. Warblers will

have done the same. They might not look much, but just listen to them sing – their song is one of my favourite sounds of summer.

The willow warbler's song is particularly beautiful, a descending harmony of notes that starts softly and ends with a fancy flourish.

From the other end of the globe, look out for redwings and fieldfares from Scandinavia, especially if you've got bird-feeders. Both look a bit like song thrushes, in fact they're related to them, but redwings have rusty-red flanks, and fieldfares have orangey-yellow breasts.

Q Is climate change a factor for local wildlife?

A I've been told off for using the analogy of canaries down the mine before – mainly because it's a terrible pun – but that's exactly what wildlife is, especially birds, when it comes to detecting the impact climate change is having on our world.

Last year, an RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) and BTO (British Trust for Ornithology) study found that chaffinches are now laying eggs about a week earlier than they did in the mid-1960s, and that blue tits, robins and swallows are showing similar patterns. It might not seem much, but birds like blue tits only have one brood per year, and they actually time it to coincide with the emergence of caterpillars. The last few years have seen a shortage of caterpillars at this crucial time because the chicks have arrived too early.

Q How can people spot rarer creatures such as badgers?

A Contact Kent Wildlife Trust, who'll put you in touch with some good badger-watching sites. If you have badgers using your garden, keep an eye out around dusk and into the evening, as this is when they're most likely to forage for food. Badgers are very social creatures, so they'll also use this time to play – a marvellous sight if you're lucky enough to see it.

If you reckon badgers are in the area, you can encourage them by putting food out – they love peanuts especially. While it's not great to feed them loads of sugary things, they also have a remarkably sweet tooth, so putting out the odd bit of cake will be much appreciated.

Q How did you get involved in wildlife conservation?

A I grew up in the Cotswolds and spent endless summers as a child peering under rocks, digging about in the dirt, and generally driving my mum potty with all the wonders I'd found. I remember finding a fossil once and sending it off to the Really Wild Show, hoping the show's presenter Chris Packham would knock on my door. Now I'm working for the RSPB, Chris is our vice-president and I've been lucky enough to meet him.

• Register to receive a free wildlife-gardening advice pack with the RSPB's Homes for Wildlife. Visit the website at www.rspb.org.uk or call 0870 240 1001.

The passionate wildlife supporter and area representative for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds spoke to **Nick Ames** about the simple things people can do to turn their gardens into a haven for nature

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The Kingfisher Trust runs boat trips for disabled people. Search 'Kingfisher'



Highlights of this year's Lounge on the Farm music festival. Search 'Lounge'



Skanska unveils its Learning Garden at the Kent County Show. Search 'learning'

EDITOR'S CHOICE

You can view all these videos and others from around the county with the click of a mouse at...

yourkenttv.co.uk

Cancer charity wants our readers to kick-start £8m fund-raiser

Search is on to find the owner of the county's Ugliest Mug

A CHARITY has today launched a hunt for the Ugliest Mug in Kent to kick-start one of the biggest fund-raising events in Britain.

But before you take offence and start arguing the virtues of inner beauty – they're not interested in your faces.

Macmillan Cancer Support wants to find the most quirky or bizarre drinking mug in the county.

For the Ugly Mug Amnesty, which it is launching today backed by KOS Media, it wants you to dig out old mugs lurking at the back of your cupboards or being used to hold toothbrushes in the bathroom.

When you've found your Ugliest Mug, take a photo of you holding it by your face and email it to the address at the end of this story.

Also make sure you tell us if it has an interesting history or funny story behind how it

■ BY JON COATES

came into your possession. Every week we'll choose an Ugly Mug of the Week, which we'll put on our websites.

So try to make sure we can see the mug clearly in your photo and include your name, age, address, job and contact details.

Encouraged

Then a week before Macmillan Cancer Support's World's Biggest Coffee Morning on Friday, September 25, we'll choose and publish the winner of the Ugly Mug Amnesty.

The winner will receive a World's Biggest Coffee Morning Mug from Macmillan Cancer Support and a £50 Coffee Gift Set from KOS Media.

Laura Thornton, Macmillan Cancer Support's fund-raising manager for Kent, said:



GETTING THE MESSAGE ACROSS: Nurse Josie Richards (left), and radiographers Brenda Manktelow (right) and Steve Dann (centre), who all work for Macmillan, helped launch the Ugly Mug Amnesty and The World's Biggest Coffee Morning.

"An Ugly Mug Amnesty has never been done before, but everyone has a mug lurking at the back of their cupboard with a story behind it.

"We want to ask people to send in pictures of their mugs and tell us the history behind them."

The World's Biggest Coffee Morning is Macmillan's flagship fund-raiser.

Now in its 19th year, it has become one of the biggest fund-raising events in Britain along with Children in Need and Red Nose Day.

Macmillan asks the public to host or attend a coffee morning, with all donations going directly to those affected by cancer.

Supporters are encouraged to visit www.macmillan.org.uk/coffee to register and pick up fund-raising tips, or call 0845 602 1246. Make sure you enter the code RNA 10 so Macmillan know you are a KOS Media reader.

Last year the World's Biggest Coffee Morning raised £7.5 million and the target this year is more than £8m nationwide.

But we are calling on all our readers to help make Kent the biggest fund-raiser in the country. We'll be holding a coffee morning for staff on September 25 and urge businesses across the county to join in too.

Macmillan has 120 health professionals active across Kent helping patients and their families deal with cancer.

Their support means people do not have to face harrowing ordeals on their own.

All entries into the Ugly Mug Amnesty must be received by Friday, September 11, with the winner announced in the Wednesday, September 16 papers.

But you don't have to wait till then – get your entries in to be crowned Ugly Mug of the Week and see yourself on our websites.

Send your entries by post to Jon Coates, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeeth, TN25 6SR, or email them to jon.coates@kos-media.co.uk.



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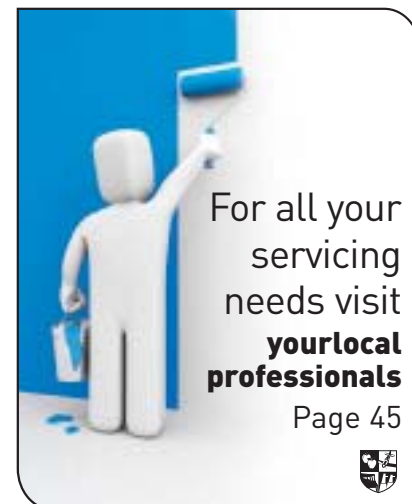


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Award Winning Company

Regulator tells water firms to drop prices

WATER companies in Kent could be forced to slash bills by as much as ten per cent over the next five years.

The industry regulator Ofwat published its draft responses to firms' business plans last week, with all five providing water and sewerage services in Kent told to either cut or freeze the amount they expect customers to pay.

Homeowners served by South East Water could see their bills go down by an average of six per cent by 2015 – or from £170 to £160 – compared with the £48 increase proposed by the company.

The draft response also calls for Southern Water bills to go down by an average of two

■ BY STEVE KNIGHT

per cent to £373 (£426 proposed), while customers served by Veolia Water Southeast – formerly Folkestone and Dover Water – could see reductions of ten per cent, down to £177 (£226 proposed).

All calculations are before inflation.

Draft

Karen Gibbs, the Consumer Council for Water's policy manager for London and the South East, welcomed Ofwat's recommendations.

She said: "It looks like good news for customers. Ofwat appears to be saying the compa-



DROP IN THE BUCKET: Water industry regulator Ofwat has told companies their planned price hikes are unacceptable

nies can deliver good services without having to increase bills as much as proposed in their business plans.

"Now the companies and the CCW will have to look at where Ofwat has challenged investment proposals to see how that will impact on services and whether it will alter the amount spent on what customers see as priority areas.

"This is the first time the CCW has been involved in price setting and we were aware huge price increases would not be welcome in the current economic climate."

Four of Kent's five water companies released statements on Thursday saying they had noted Ofwat's draft response and would consider its views ahead of a final decision in November.

But Thames Water reacted angrily to the report. The company wanted to increase its average bills by 17 per cent to £356 by 2015 but has instead been asked to keep them stable.

Chief executive David Owens said: "Initial indications suggest the draft may not allow us to deliver what customers want.

"For example, this means we won't be able to reduce leakage at all over the next five years."

Ofwat chief executive Regina Finn said: "We understand times are hard and have listened to customers. They want a safe, reliable water supply at reasonable cost.

"Our decisions allow efficient, well-run companies to invest in the right place at the right time for the right price."



ON THE RUN: Nigel (left) and Adam, with Natalie Court of Cancer Research UK

Michelle's friends are going the extra mile

TWO friends have pledged to run 10k to help a friend battling cancer for the third time.

Adam Dudley and Nigel Scott will tackle the Leeds Castle 10k run in September in support of Michelle Borrett, who was diagnosed with skin cancer 18 years ago.

Michelle, 38, who lives near the pair in Walderslade, had a cancerous mole removed when she was 20.

After being told the cancer hadn't spread, she went on to marry Gary and

have a daughter, Grace, now eight, but in spring 2005 Michelle found a lump in her groin and investigations revealed the cancer had returned.

Despite surgery to remove 22 lymph nodes, Michelle has now been told the cancer has spread to her brain and the future looks uncertain.

The two friends – who admit they are not natural-born runners – will run the Cancer Research UK event on Sunday, September 27, in the picturesque grounds of the castle, near Maidstone.

Adam, 43, an IT support analyst, said: "I admit I'm not the most active person. Training for the 10k is the first real exercise I've undertaken in more than ten years, which goes some way to showing how important this is to me."

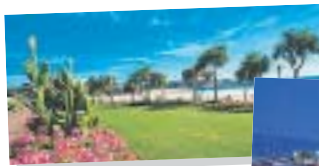
Cancer Research UK's Run 10k is one of a series of 43 fundraising events in the UK this autumn. It is hoped 2,000 participants will enter the Maidstone event to hit the fundraising target of £138,654. To sponsor Adam or Nigel, visit www.run10kspansorme.org/adamdudley.

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Villa Isis	1* Hotel	£309	£309	£309
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Runnymede Court BB	2* Hotel	£379	£469	£489

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WOMEN seeking men

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

Young lady, 20, enjoys meals out, cinema and socialising with friends, WLTW a man, 20-30, with similar interests. Eastbourne. Box 454247 ①

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

Hi I'm Katie, caring, fun-loving, 5ft5, slim single mum of 2. Enjoy clubbing out and cosy nights in with genuine man. Box 453269 ①

MATCH OF THE DAY!

Fun-to-be-with, blonde female, 25, 5ft2, a woman who loves football! Enjoys going out and staying in, looking for a like-minded man, to be her soulmate. Box 446494 ①

IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU BABY

Caring and honest lady, 25, blue eyes, blonde hair, looking for a sweet, caring and respectful non-smoking man, 25-35, for love, friendship and LTR. Box 873522 ① ②

NOT YOUR BROWN-EYED GIRL, BUT...

Blue-eyed brunette, 27, 5ft1, loves films, walking, darts, pool, singing, me time! Looking for honest guy with GSOH, to get to know. Box 880105 ①

YOURS AND YOURS ONLY

Attractive, down-to-earth British-Indian single mum, 29, WLTW with male 30-35, 5ft4, no ties, for long-term relationship. Box 883431 ①

GIVE AND TAKE IN LOVE

Loving lady, 30, blue eyes, brown hair, seeking LTR with male 30-35, 5ft4, no baggage, in the Maidstone area. Box 448471 ①

SEEKING MR DARCY

Warm, kind and sincere woman, 31, lots of love and loyalty for the right person, seeking an honest genuine man with a good heart. Box 451004 ①

HORSES FOR COURSES...

Caring, loving, affectionate female, 30, 5ft2, blonde, likes walking, horse riding, animals, seeks affectionate male, 30-40, for lasting, loving relationship. Box 384013 ①

IN THE COUNTRY

Are you the one? I'm 33, single, 5ft2, pure country lass from farming background, seeking my lovely country man to make me forever happy. Box 892265 ①

A FAIRYTALE ENDING!

Princess Fiona, 34, looking to meet her Shrek. 5ft8, short brown/blonde hair, blue eyes, large build, seeks romantic caring guy for friendship, maybe more! Box 877357 ① ②

GOOD LUCK CHARM

Sporty female, 34, 5ft2, likes the gym, beach walks, Tennis and cycling, WLTW similar male in his 30s for friendship in Eastbourne. Box 453712 ①

HAPPY DAYS!

Attractive, fun-loving female, 31, 5ft4, size 12, dark hair with blonde highlights, tactile, WLTW intelligent, professional, attractive guy, for a happy relationship. Tunbridge Wells. Box 308734 ① ②

SOUND GOOD?

Hello I'm Andrea, 35, petite 5ft3, shoulder length curly hair. I enjoy eating out, cinema and I'm looking for friendship and possible long term relationship. Box 453039 ①

SEALED WITH A KISS

Petite lady, 36, long hair, blue eyes, single mum, enjoys holidays, wine and dining, laughing, seeks loyal, loving man for friendship and more. Box 453079 ①

STARRY NIGHTS

Hello I'm Sarah, single mum from Kent, brown hair enjoy swimming nights out looking for a caring man to share the best thing in life. Box 878378 ①

HISTORIC MEETING?

Mum of three, 36, long mousey hair, blue eyes, interested in historical places, music, eating out, seeks kind, caring, genuine male 36-49, non-smoker, for LTR. Box 440693 ①

GALLOP AHEAD!

Maidstone-based woman, 36, 5ft5, slim, blue eyes. I'm caring, honest and have 4 children. I enjoy drives and horse riding and WLTW honest, reliable man. Box 451311 ①

LOVE TO LOVE YOU

Lovely female, 36, 5ft4, medium/large build, blonde hair, blue eyes, own house, loves walking, going out, the usual! Seeking male for long-term/serious relationship. Box 348102 ①

MEND A BROKEN HEART

Single mum, 37, fun-loving, been hurt in past, looking for nice, genuine guy for hopeful happiness - no time wasters! Box 908053 ① ②



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SEIZE THE DAY

Loving female, 36, 5ft4, brown hair, green eyes, likes socialising, staying in, seeks genuine male for friendship and more. Box 428666 ①

CUTE AS CAN BE

Cute single mum of four, 38, Kent-based, into most things, looking for friendship, possibly romance. Box 897985 ① ②

BLONDE AMBITION

Bubbly, cuddly, blonde single mum, 39, 5ft6, likes cars, reading, pubs, cosy nights in, having a laugh, looking for that right male for LTR. Box 905614 ① ②

A SOUL MATE

Black Christian girl, 39, likes country music, loving, considerate, kind, caring, looking for a like-minded man, 32-50, with a pretty inside. Box 453066 ①

ENTHUSIASM ENCOURAGED!

Lovely pretty big-busted lady, 39, medium build, 5ft5, lots of energy! likes the gym, reading, new experiences! seeking nice man for potential exciting relationship! Box 446724 ①

TO THE STARS

Woman with a great sense of humour, I'm 40 and I like going out, astrology, writing and socialising. How about you? Kent area. Box 453877 ①

YOUNG-AT-HEART

Attractive 38yr old female, dark brown hair, blue eyes, curvy, likes days out, music, concerts, cinema, walks, cycling, seeks loving, fun male, for friendship, relationship. Box 901893 ① ②

PERFECT MATCH

Hi I'm Nikki, 5ft7, brown hair, green eyes, enjoys animals especially my pets. Looking for a tall man who has a personality compatible with mine Box 453374 ①

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JOINED AT THE HIP

Sociable petite girl with great SOH, 40, blonde, sociable, love football! Looking for fun guy with great SOH for inseparable partnership. Box 880434 ① ②

A NICE BOTTLE OF WINE

Lovely, glossy brunette, 39yr old, petite, bubbly and loving, enjoys theatre, music and eating out, WLTW a professional, loving and tactile male for a relationship. Box 442551 ① ②

BETWEEN US

Asian lady, 41, single, no ties, out going, fun loving, professional, looking for a white male, genuine, professional and solvent. Box 451900 ①

FOR A RELATIONSHIP?

Shy but confident-once-known female, 40, likes socialising, tennis, walks, swimming; seeks gent with similar interests to find hopeful love with. Box 452106 ①

THE WIT TO WOO!

Kent female, 40, 5'7", dark eyes, GSOH, no ties, likes cosy nights in, socialising, country pubs, cinema, seeks loyal, caring male, for friendship & more. Box 152862 ①

LIFE IS GIVING LOVE A GUARANTEE

Down-to-earth lady, 42, sincere, honest and reliable, looking for a male for friendship first, going out, enjoying evenings and perhaps something more later on. Box 449712 ①

I SHOULD BE SO LUCKY

Hello, I'm Karen, 42, dark brown hair, medium build, GSOH, looking for a man with no issues and GSOH who can enjoy life with me. Box 452204 ①

HELLO EVERYONE!

Single dog-owner, 42, fun-loving, kind and loyal, likes meals out, weekends away, country walks, WLTW a non-smoking guy to share it all with. Seaford Box 454569 ①

BELLA ISABEL

Lovely, fun and caring brunette, 42, recently divorced, intelligent, hard working, fun-loving, WLTW a gent to socialise with. Box 878250 ①

LIVE LIFE TO THE FULL

Good-looking brunette from Kent, 43, 5ft10, likes bowling, eating in/out etc. Looking for a good-looking guy, 35-45, with GSOH for friendship/relationship. Box 450349 ①

YOU NEVER KNOW

Kind, loving and caring mum, 43, 5ft5, round but cuddly! Just looking for someone to share my life with... how about you? St. Leonards-on-Sea. Box 446457 ①

GENUINE REPLIES ONLY

Bubbly female, 44, brunette, N/S, medium/large build, enjoys singing and theatre. Would love to meet a decent fun-loving guy, similar age, pref non-smoker for LTR. Box 445955 ①

TLC ON OFFER FOR THE RIGHT PERSON!

Blonde, blue eyed woman, 44, fun-loving, looking for Mr Right. I love going out, nights in, movies, walking, long gigs. WLTW the right man for TLC. Box 880280 ① ②

THIS STATE OF INDEPENDENCE

Hard-working female, 41, 5'4", bubbly, independent woman, love to laugh, socialising with friends, looking for independent man who values TLC. Box 414156 ①

LOVE TO MEET YOU

Kind woman, 42, outgoing, happy-go-lucky, sometimes shy. I like gardening, socialising, travel, walks. Looking for happy, fun fella. Aylesford Box 428464 ①

COULD IT BE YOU?

Hi I'm 44, slim, 5ft6, a redhead, love nights out, socialising, looking for friendship initially and hopefully more later on. Box 889800 ①

STARTING OVER

Divorced 45yr old cuddly woman, brown eyes/hair, likes swimming, animals, cinema, soaps, the beach. WLTW a honest, non-smoking man for friendship, maybe more. Ashford Box 878141 ①

I LOVE LIFE

I'm Roxie, 46, 5ft7, dark curly hair, like theatre, opera and ballet, seeking a man that full of life and adventures! Box 454391 ①

COME ON DOWN!

Honest, bubbly female 45, long hair, slim, enjoys walking, cinema, socialising; seeks honest, friendly chap for friendship leading to more. Box 882693 ①

YOUNG AT HEART

Young 46, fun-loving but also mature, serious female, looking for someone fit, handsome, intelligent and full of fun. Box 884113 ① ②

FRIENDSHIP FIRST

Understanding, caring female, 45, 5ft4, medium build, brown hair, likes cinema, animals, music, romantic puns, seeking male for cuddles, hugs and more. Box 444873 ①

MAID MARIAN!

Hi, I'm Marian, petite, blonde, green eyes, 46, looking for my Mr Right, to have fun with and enjoy lasting relationship with. Box 447398 ①

HEART AND SOUL

Easy-going single mum, 46, 5ft4, size 12/14, likes bowling, gardening, swimming, looking for a man, 35-49, slim/medium build with similar interests. Maidstone Box 454176 ①

FANCY A FILM?

Hi, I'm Pam, 47, 5ft11, brown hair, hazel eyes, slim/dish, divorced, looking for a LTR with a nice and genuine man. No time-wasters please! Heathfield. Box 448626 ①

SOUND GOOD?

Hi I'm Lynne 46, 5ft4, dark hair/eyes, love reading/writing, going out, astrology, cars; seeking honest, caring, outgoing guy to enjoy music, fun, friendship and more! Box 449186 ①

ARE YOU THE ONE FOR ME?

Caring, cute female, 46, petite, likes socialising, dancing, travelling, good food, seeking intelligent, loyal man 42-52 for love and TLC. Seaford. Box 444366 ①

HELP ME OPEN UP

Easygoing lady, 46, dark brown hair/blue eyes, medium build, likes cinema, seeking a man who's a match for me with GSOH for relationship. Box 441622 ①

LOOK THIS WAY!

Slender single mum, 48, 5ft5, light brown hair, works full time, friendly and easy-going. WLTW lots of new friends, friendly someone special. Box 878456 ①

BE MY FRIEND AND LOVER

Bubbly, caring lady, 47, divorced with 2 teenagers, dark hair, medium build, into cooking, driving, love to talk, laugh and have fun, seeking a normal guy Box 425952 ①

WOMEN seeking women

ANY OFFERS?

Curvy female, 26, 5ft9, blue eyes, likes reading, painting, walks and nights out, WLTW an honest, sincere and feminine female for a possible relationship. Box 452108 ①

JUST A GIRL

Bubbly, feminine, attractive lady seeking same! I'm slim, athletic, blonde hair/blue eyes. I'm 28 and WLTW similar female. Box 878997 ① ②

FUN AND MAYBE MORE

Passionate female, 37, new to town, WLTW passionate, genuine companions to socialise with, go out and have some fun, then see what happens. Ashford area. Box 880564 ①

THE SWEETEST THING

Hello there, I'm Heather, 46, kind and caring, looking for a similar soulmate. Seaford Box 454133 ①

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HERE AND NOW

Outgoing lady, 50, enjoys walks along the beach, nights out and in with a quiet bottle of wine, seeks man to love forever. Box 449524 ①

LOVELY BUBBLY

Short 51yr old professional lady, likes history, films and reading, seeking a genuine gent, 45-58, with GSOH to enjoy evenings out, stimulating conversations and fun. Box 452311 ①

CARING & PROFESSIONAL

Female 49, 5ft4, long hair, slim, likes eating out, the beach, travel, seeks a friendly chap, 48-55. Hastings Box 417100 ①

HIT THE JACKPOT

Good-looking female, 50, looking for a kind, reliable and honest man, must be a moderate drinker, for companionship and romance. Box 878216 ①

JUST IMAGINE

Petite, brunette, bubbly, friendly, easygoing single mum, 49, enjoys cinema, eating out, socialising, most things, WLTW genuine male, to see where life takes us! Box 893562 ①

BRING ME TO LIFE

Lighthearted female, 42, 5ft2, medium build, loves walking, socialising, swimming, holidays, looking for friendship maybe more. Box 453832 ①

YOU DON'T KNOW UNTIL YOU CALL...

Young-looking, hard-working 53yr old living in East Sussex. I am a happy, caring person with a good sense of humour. Non-smoker. Heathfield. Box 883410 ①

COMPANIONSHIP, LAUGHTER, HOPEFULLY MORE

Curvy & cuddly, outgoing, friendly, honest female, 53, 5ft7, larger build, fair hair, likes socialising, country walks, theatre, cinema, music, swimming. WLTW similar loving male. Box 443642 ①

WALKS ALONG THE BEACH

55yr old bubbly, cheerful, divorced lady, looking for a genuine, tall, smart man with a GSOH to share the finer things in life with. Box 453532 ①

SMART MOVE

Spontaneous, friendly, lively female, 55, likes cinema, walking, cooking, socialising, seeks similar person for friendship, more. Box 430854 ①

ACCOMPANY ME

Happy go lucky woman, 57, enjoys most things in life, looking for a homely chap for company and more. Gillingham Box 454320 ①

LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS!

Smart petite lady, 55, 5ft4, tall, blonde hair, green eyes, likes restaurants, theatre, cinema, travel abroad; seeking happy guy with similar interests. Box 448795 ①

WALKS ALONG THE COAST

Honest & sincere female, 58, tall, GSOH, loves country pubs, coasts, cinema, seeking a man who's a match for me with GSOH for relationship. Box 441622 ①

BEING WITH YOU

Hi I'm Jenny, 61yr old widow, enjoys pub meals, countryside, the beach, cinema, seeks loving male for friendship and more. Box 453104 ①

CALL ME LOVE

Young at heart 63yr old woman, likes most things, looking for genuine male, for friendship/more. Box 452662 ①

HAPPILY EVER AFTER

Happy-go-lucky attractive female, 65, petite, likes gardening, swimming and walking, looking for a honest and reliable man to share life with. Ashford. Box 454370 ①

Women seeking women

ANY OFFERS?

Curvy female, 26, 5ft9, blue eyes, likes reading, painting, walks and nights out, WLTW an honest, sincere and feminine female for a possible relationship. Box 452108 ①

JUST A GIRL

Bubbly, feminine, attractive lady seeking same! I'm slim, athletic, blonde hair/blue eyes. I'm 28 and WLTW similar female. Box 878997 ① ②

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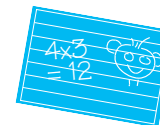


MEN seeking women

FOR LOVE

Hard-working male, 29, 5ft10, dark hair, brown eyes, medium build, plays harder! likes going/eating out, walks, pubs, loves life, seeking similar happy, trustworthy lady. Box 442752 ①

BEST FRIENDS



Good King Hal's castle mural is looking gr-eight

THE portly figure of Henry VIII has been immortalised on a new Leeds Castle mural created by primary school pupils.

Artistic youngsters from Kingswood Primary dipped their brushes in paint to create the mural near the children's play area.

As part of their creative curriculum, seven children aged between nine and 11 painted a mural to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Henry VIII's accession to the throne.

King Hal was one of the castle's most notorious owners, transforming it into a royal palace in honour of his first wife, Catherine of Aragon.

The mural has been painted on part of an enormous hoarding erected around recently demolished greenhouses, which had become unsafe.

The children were given free rein over the design and content of the piece, which depicts the castle's links to Henry Tudor.

Leeds Castle provided the materials and scaffolding, and participating pupils were allowed to use the Knights' Realm play-

■ BY EMILY HALL

ground during their stay on site as well as each being given a 12-month pass.

Inspiration for the mural was drawn from a painting which now hangs in the Henry VIII Banqueting Hall called the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

It commemorates a meeting between the Tudor monarch and the French king held in 1520 and shows Henry and his court on route to France from Dover after staying at the castle.

Project leader Laura Benaggoune said: "It's the end of the school year, and the children in year six are either leaving primary education or have just finished their SATs, so it's nice for them to get out."

"They're itching to do more exciting things and this experience was something memorable to take away with them when they move on to secondary school."

More local schools are expected to add their artistic contributions to the mural over the coming months.



CROWNING GLORY: Kingswood Primary School pupils who took part in the Henry VIII mural painting project at Leeds Castle

BREAK TIME

Academy youngsters rise to the challenge



DISCUS, high jump, shot-put and javelin were among the hotly-contested events during New Line Learning Academy's 2009 sports day.

Pupils from the Maidstone school were bussed to the Julie Rose Stadium in Ashford for the competition, which couldn't take place at the school because of building work.

About 300 youngsters took part to mark the end of term. Academy cheerleaders

were on hand to spur participants on and some staff even joined in, competing with students.

Head of PE, Phil Jones, said: "It was great to see so many staff taking part in events."

"This can only be good for building relationships and I know the pupils enjoyed competing against them."

"It was a fantastic day and fortunately the weather was kind as well."

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yourmaidstoneblogger

Each week we get a mystery writer to air their views on living in and around Maidstone...

Human interaction has been stolen by modern technology

JUDGING humanity while in a queue at Tesco is not the most life-affirming activity, but this week I found myself – plastic-packaged houmous, rocket salad and avocado in hand – in that very position.

It amazes me that we seem to have stripped day-to-day life of human interaction.

We have reached the end of the self-service decade – in banks, supermarkets, in the driver's seat, on buses, while juggling our iPhones, MP3s, sat-navs and other unfathomable electronic gadgets that tell us whether we need to take more steps, eat more fruit, turn left, breathe...

"Please insert your credit or debit card" comes from eight checkouts, while a bland-sounding robot with no discernable accent drones "incorrect item" in the bagging area, while one girl (who cannot be more than 16 but is very much alive) sits as a puppet-master, chewing gum, watching over these

automatic time-saving machines. It won't scan your pasta salad, madam? Please enter authentication code. The machine understands the barcode.

This march of technology has become more of a sprint. I remember at the end of the 1990s, in sixth form, a friend telling me that her phone could send texts (TEXTS?) if you just typed what you wanted to say on the screen.

In a very short space of time we have become nothing more than ASL, CYALSR, B4N.

We scan our own salads, marvel at paying in cheques through a shiny silver slot, interact with each other through a series of scrambled letters and numbers. Why? To save time, of course! But time for what?

A week ago I stood at London Bridge station, where a sign told me I must buy my ticket before boarding or run a gauntlet of fines.

Drivers no longer chat, take your money or comment on the weather. They drive. That is their title and that is what they do.

I asked a question about my stop and the driver (note, no conductors anymore, automat-

ic devices can save a year's salary) said "The bus will tell you". Minutes later, far too close to a man who had never heard of deodorant, I find the bus speaks. Again, that blandest of accents warns you when your stop is near.

Soon the buses will be driverless, navigating the city's streets using magnets embedded in the road. Passengers will determine their pick-up point using Bluetooth technology. And that is not Orwellian thinking. That is fact.

And so I wonder what it would be like to go back a decade, before the internet (how did we ever do anything before that?) before mobile phones, before everything had been over-complicated in an effort to over-simplify.

Progress is unending and corresponds to our view that we are endlessly perfectible.

Yet from my position in the supermarket queue, I would choose imperfection in the blink of an eye.

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If there is a story in your area you think we should be covering contact the acting editor, **Jon Coates**, on **01303 817048** or email him on the details above. If you want to be the next Maidstone blogger then all you have to do is submit an article to us (of around 500 words) and email it to the editor. And don't forget, for all the latest news and video from your town log-on to www.yourmaidstone.co.uk.

Write to The Editor, Yourmaidstone, KoS Media, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR.

* We cannot guarantee all articles will be published and all are at the editor's discretion

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ONE of the greatest pleasures of summer is eating and entertaining with family and friends.

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One lucky reader has the chance to win a selection of the popular Pyrex® glassware including

mixing bowls and glass dishes with lids (ideal for marinating) and a luxury hamper of the complete Maille® range of mustards, sauces and vinegars. Six runners up will also be able to win a Maille® hamper, which will include the famous Maille Dijon Originale and Maille Wholegrain mustard.

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adventurous with the entire Maille® range to spice up their summer menus.

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The closing date is August 7, 2009.

Question: What year was Maille established?

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TALK TIME

ALAN WHIPPY

The Medway Film Makers founder member talks about the club, its work and how any would-be new members can get involved.



Tell us about the club

We are a small but dedicated and enthusiastic group of film makers. Our mission statement sounds a bit grand, to promote education, skills and knowledge in filmmaking. We do all that in a friendly and humorous way. We do have lots of skills like advanced film editing, including chroma key, so if you don't know what that is then perhaps you should join us and find out.

Our members make films of all sorts, from dramas and documentaries to one-minute short comedies and help each other edit family and holiday footage. We also have regular 'in club' competitions. Some of our members enter their films in national and international competitions. We have achieved a respectable collection of gold and silver awards together with many commendation certificates.

How would a new member get involved?

We meet at Davis Estate Community Centre, Chatham every second Thursday. If you are over 16 years and interested in learning film making, or extending your skills and joining filming projects then why not come and see us. You get two free evenings as a guest then you are invited to join. Our evenings are devoted to a programme to extend our knowledge and skills, plus of course, tea and biscuits and socialising.

Don't be shy about coming we are friendly housed-trained and don't bite. For more information on Medway Film Makers visit www.medwaycamcorder.co.uk.

YOUR LETTERS

yourmaidstoneblogger

Dad of two Gary Wright asks why do so many parents feel they must buy extra tuition for their

What tutoring is teaching us about our education system

What are kids doing in school?

I read the blog on tutoring by Gary Wright with interest and feel I should address a couple of points. Firstly, he's worried about the safety of tutors. I can inform him they have recently been asked to cough up £64 for a registration scheme including police checks.

However, what guarantee of security is that? All it proves is that the person hasn't been caught yet. The best way to make sure your child is safe is not to treat the tutor like a glorified babysitter, but to make sure you are present or at least within earshot for your child's lessons. Secondly, he seems to feel that there are parents who use tutors as a substitute for spending time with their children.

In my experience, this is not true, the parents who make the sacrifices to pay for a tutor care deeply about their offspring. I do agree though, that the level of private tuition is a damning indictment of the education system. It's got to the point where I wonder what on earth kids do in school all day.

Caroline Brown, Rochester, by email



COMMENT ONLINE TOO

NOT only can you use email and letters to respond to our stories, don't forget you can comment via our website too.

Beneath most stories on the www.yourmaidstone.co.uk website there is the facility to leave your comments on whatever YOU thought of the online article. To leave your remarks, simply click on the 'Add your comments' link and tell us what you think. And remember, www.yourmaidstone.co.uk is updated daily, bringing you the latest, breaking news from across Maidstone as well as our villages. We will include the best on these pages too - ensuring your comments reach the widest possible audience.

In addition, if you find your newsagent, supermarket or petrol station runs out of Yourmaidstone before you've picked up your copy, you never need to miss out. On www.yourmaidstone.co.uk you can access, for free, the full newspaper in our highly acclaimed e-editions.

Tutors are just trying to help

I am one of your reviled private tutors! I would not be in gainful

employment if it wasn't for the deplorable state of the greater part of our country's education system.

In my mind I am only helping students to attain a far better grade, even if in your mind this

grade is inflated.

When schools (even grammar schools) have young and inexperienced teaching staff it is little wonder that parents opt to spend their own hard money to help their children.

Many a time I have heard from parents' tales of woe, all to often highlighting the state of educational provision.

At this point I will add that I do not tutor students less than 13/14 years old, and I do not necessarily agree that tutoring four year olds is a good idea.

With reference to your point about getting 11 year olds into grammar school.

There would not be such a clamour for places at these institutions if the remaining state schools (and this does not include the heavily over-subscribed voluntary-aided schools) were seen to be of a sufficiently high calibre.

Unfortunately, for whatever reason there are a number of schools in every LEA which suffer a bad name and reputation, and the cause of this can be manifold.

Little wonder then that any well-meaning parent wants to see their children succeed at their full potential.

As for CRB checks, I have had to get one done in the past, but as a self-employed person it is almost impossible to get such a check carried out on oneself.

Most tutors have nothing to hide and are very often just school teachers trying to earn a few extra pennies in their spare time.

Such tutors already have a CRB check in place!

Clive Brown, comment posted on blog at www.yourmaidstone.co.uk



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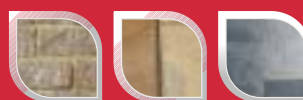
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Why not have tutors? I'm no communist

The other way of looking at this, is that parents are simply helping their children to reach their full potential, rather than artificially boosting their results as you seem to imply.

Why on earth should parents not spend their money improving their children's educational attainment?

Only some kind of damn communist would think that was a bad thing.

P Cook, comment posted on blog at www.yourmaidstone.co.uk



NHS should have careers centre too

Let me begin by first saying I do not in any way have negative feelings to the people and their families connected to the Army and its sub divisions.

However, I feel very strongly about the Army Careers Centre opening during the midst of controversial debates about military funding,

Trident and the Hampshire helicopters for a start.

Why during a credit crisis is it the Army that gets career centres and has no one ever thought of advertising the other public services like the NHS in this way?

Siobhan McManmon, from Maidstone, comment posted on web story at www.yourmaidstone.co.uk



Small-minded and bitter, join the BNP

I don't believe you. Are you black or are you Indian? No, I think you're just a small-minded bigot who oozes bitterness.

The BNP is just the right party for you. I recommend you join it and become a regular attendee at their meetings. You'll find plenty of extremists there who share your views.

You never know, if you scare enough people you might become a councillor.

Oh sorry, then you'd have to do something for someone else rather than worrying all the time about your own petty life.

Europe and the rest of the world

are out there by the way. It doesn't bite.

Simon Haydon, comment posted on blog at www.yourmaidstone.co.uk

Join us here out in the real world

Since when did councillors have to do 'something for someone else'? I'm absolutely amazed at Mr Haydon's comments.

I would say that they were almost racist and perhaps he, in his 'small-minded little world' should get in the real world!

Paul, comment posted on blog at www.yourmaidstone.co.uk

I applaud your views, you're not racist

Hear hear! But I think you suspected, and I thought too, that someone would jump and scream 'racist' at you and indeed someone is recommending that you join the BNP for your views.

Unfortunately 'racist' is the tag given to a lot of people who are just fed up of the one-sidedness of the situation here in the UK.

I applaud your views, and before someone screams racist at me, which they will, just so you know, I share my home with a British-born Pakistani who also agrees with you.

Enya Whittle, comment posted on blog at www.yourmaidstone.co.uk

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But whether we are enjoying some sun in the Med or in our back garden we still need to protect ourselves.

Skin cancer is one of the most common cancers in the UK. Right now, around 1,700 people are being treated for malignant melanoma and other skin cancers in the eastern and coastal Kent region.

Most skin cancers are caused by damage from sunburn and could easily be prevented.

1. Apply sunblocks or sunscreens with high sun protection factors (at least factor 15).
2. Take extra care with children – use factor 30 plus. For babies use factor 50 plus.
3. Apply generously and reapply frequently, especially after activities such as swimming or towelling.
4. Wear a wide-brimmed hat to reduce exposure to the face, eyes, head and neck.
5. Limit the amount of time you spend in the sun, particularly between 11am and 3pm.

6. Cover skin with clothing giving good protection - examples are longsleeved shirts and loose clothing with a close weave.
7. Seek shade, but remember sunburn can occur even when in partial shade or when cloudy.
8. Wear wrap-around sunglasses.
9. Remember certain prescribed drugs, medicines, foods, cosmetics and plant materials can also make people more sensitive to sunlight.

Coping with sunburn

Sunburn is when your skin overheats and becomes red and painful and may later peel or blister.

If you get sunburn:

- Cool the skin down by dabbing it with a cool, wet towel or tissue.
- If really bad, take a quick cold shower.
- Don't go back into the sun until you've healed.
- Drink plenty of fluids to replace the water lost through sweating and to cool down.
- Apply calamine or after-sun lotion.
- For adults, painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen can help relieve pain and reduce swelling.

Be prepared for a heatwave

IT'S not just the sun that can be our foe as well as our friend. Continued humidity, especially during a heatwave, can be dangerous too.

The heat can affect anyone, but some people run a greater risk of serious harm, especially the very young, older people and those with serious illnesses.

It can make heart and respiratory problems worse and in extreme cases can lead to heat stroke, which can be fatal.

To stay safe:

10. Keep an eye on children, vulnerable friends and neighbours.
11. Keep plenty of water to hand and stay in the shade where possible.
12. Shut and shade windows when it is hotter outside and open them for ventilation when cooler.
13. Avoid doing things that need lots of effort like sport, DIY or gardening.
14. People with serious health problems (for example heart conditions), should avoid going out in the heat, especially between 11am and 3pm.

15. Drink cold drinks like water or fruit juice regularly and avoid tea, coffee and alcohol.

16. Stay tuned to the weather forecast and plan ahead with supplies – think of elderly neighbours who may need help with supplies.

17. Identify the coolest room in the house to cool down or sleep in.

18. People with respiratory problems should stay inside during the hottest part of the day.



for summer...



HERE ARE YOUR HEALTH'S TOP 50 TIPS ON HOW TO DO IT SAFELY

Enjoy your barbecue in safety

WHAT better way to enjoy a balmy evening than some healthy barbecue food with friends?

Just don't become one of the 965 cases of people in east Kent turned up at accident and emergency with food poisoning last year – that doesn't include those who suffered nasty fire-related injuries either!

When you're cooking on a barbecue, make sure you:

19. Place your barbecue on a level surface, away from plants and trees.
20. Cover the bottom of your barbecue with coal to a depth of no more than 5cm (2in).
21. Use only recognised firelighters or starter fuel, and then only on cold coals.
22. Wait until coals are glowing red with a powdery grey surface before you start cooking.
23. Wash your hands every time you touch raw meat and keep it separate from other foods.
24. Properly thaw frozen meat before you cook it.
25. Turn meat regularly and move it around the barbecue to cook it evenly.
26. Remember that meat is safe to eat only when it is piping hot in the centre, there is no pink meat visible and the juices are clear.
27. Keep prepared food in the fridge wherever possible and don't leave it out in the sun.

Avoid bringing back the worst kind of souvenir

A sexually transmitted infection (STI) or unintended pregnancy can be the worst kind of souvenir to bring home. Last year, more than 2,500 sexually transmitted infections were diagnosed in east Kent genitourinary medicine clinics.

28. Always buy a pack of condoms in addition to your normal contraceptive.
29. Vomiting, diarrhoea, and some medicines, including some antibiotics and some anti-malaria drugs can make the contraceptive pill and some contraceptive implants less effective so always use a condom to help protect against pregnancy and STIs.
30. Only buy condoms with the CE mark on the packet.
31. Keep condoms away from oil-based products such as suntan lotion, baby oil and lipstick.
32. Store condoms in a cool, dry place.

* For more help and advice on safer sex, visit your pharmacist, call Sexual Health Direct on 0845 122 8690 or go to www.condomessentialwear.co.uk

A real stinger

For most people, stings and bites from insects are painful but harmless. However, if you also experience symptoms anywhere else you may be having an allergic reaction and should seek emergency medical treatment.

33. Remove the sting as soon as possible with your fingers or tweezers.
34. Bee stings have a poisonous sac so take care not to puncture it as you remove the sting.
35. Wash the area with soap and water.
36. Put a cold flannel on the area.
37. Raise the part of the body that has been stung or bitten to prevent swelling.
38. Use a spray, or cream, containing local anaesthetic or antihistamine on the affected area to help prevent itching and swelling.
39. Take painkillers, such as paracetamol (if the sting or bite is very painful).
40. Don't scratch the area, as it may become infected.
41. Consult your GP if redness and itching does not clear up after 48 hours.

Have fun outdoors in safety

Summer is a great time for children to get out and experience the world around them. You do need to be aware of safety issues, but this isn't a reason to stop children enjoying activities.

42. Nominate a responsible adult to supervise the children at parties and barbecues.
43. Make sure one adult stays sober to supervise the children.
44. Ask hosts to place medicines and cleaning products out of sight and out of reach.
45. Check the garden regularly for potential hazards, such as tools, ponds or water butts.
46. If children are around barbecues, watch that they don't get too close to hot surfaces.
47. Protect your child from the sun.
48. Be safe around water with your child.
49. Consider taking a first aid course.
50. Follow all these simple steps and you be guaranteed a fun and action-packed summer in the sun.

For more help and advice visit your local pharmacist,
call NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 or go to www.nhs.uk

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Star line-up for festival

Even the organisers can't believe their luck as Gary Numan and The Blackout prepare to rock the front

HEVY MUSIC FESTIVAL

Saturday, August 1
Folkestone seafront

TOP names in alternative music will head for the seaside this weekend for the first Hevy Music Festival.

Feeder, Ash, Gary Numan (left), Hundred Reasons, Attack! Attack!, Sonic Boom Six and In Case Of Fire are just some of the artists who will rock Folkestone seafront on Saturday.

The second stage, organised in association with Sonic Heights, will feature a dream line-up of bands for anyone who loves rock.

The Blackout have also been added to the line-up, which is exciting news for music fans as the six-piece from Merthyr Tydfil are one of the biggest up-and-coming bands around.

James Dutton, co-founder of Hevy, said: "The band are touring in the US at the moment before flying back to headline a stage at Reading and Leeds, and now they're coming to Kent for the Hevy Music Festival," he said. "These guys are huge."

Kerrang Award nominees The Ghost Of A Thousand have been named one of the top five metal bands in Q Magazine. They will be appearing alongside After The Ordeal, Cancer Bats, Farewell City, One Day Elliott and The Startover.

Fans can look forward to performances by Amber Room, Eleven: Eleven, LightsGoBlue, Sharks, We Are The Ocean, The Xcerts, Elephants, Kingskin, Mexico Fallz, Heartbreak and More Than Normal.

Mr Dutton revealed how pleased he was to have attracted such a stellar line-up, particularly the King of Synth Pop, Gary Numan.

"Gary Numan is a true living legend and we can't quite believe we've managed to book him for the first-ever Hevy Music Festival. I'm going to be seriously star-struck!" he said.

"We set out to create an Alternative Music Festival for Kent to distinguish ourselves from the other great festival in this corner of the UK. Mr Numan has been credited with



paving the way for the Alternative genre back in 1979 and has directly influenced many of the biggest acts in the world today.

"To have him and his live band performing on our main stage as the sun sets over the ocean is going to be spectacular – we can't wait."

The festival will take place on the site of the former Rotunda vintage amusement park on the seafront, with its stunning views of the English Channel.

Gates open at 1pm and tickets cost £48. Book online at www.hevy.co.uk, or buy tickets in person from the Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone, The Marlowe Theatre box office in Canterbury or the Winter Gardens in Margate.



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CRAFT CASES

Ongoing
Hazlitt Arts Centre, Maidstone

THREE talented new artists are exhibiting their work in the Craft Cases at the Hazlitt Arts Centre.

The work of Anne Kelly, Nicola Crawford and Karen Gavin can be seen at the centre in Rose Yard, off Earl Street, offering visitors a diverse selection of pieces to admire. Anne Kelly, from Tunbridge Wells, is a BA graduate in ATC from Goldsmiths College and creates layered embroideries made of many types of fabric, using recycled materials to create her 'small worlds'.

Freelance illustrator Karen Gavin, from Nettlestead, makes highly collectible hand painted cushions and has just completed an art and design foundation degree at Kent's University for Creative Arts.

Former newspaper worker Nicola Crawford, from



Sittingbourne, decided to have a complete career change by teaching herself to make jewellery from recycled silver.

Now studying for a foundation degree at UCA in Rochester, she uses real

leaves and semi-precious stones to create her unique pieces.

The arts centre is open from 10am to 6pm, Monday to Saturday. For more information go to www.maidstonearts.com.

TUNNEL VISION

Saturday, August 1
Fort Horsted, near Chatham



PAST meets present at Fort Horsted this weekend as an exciting dance event goes underground.

Tunnel Vision is a day and night event that will bring the best of electronic music to Medway, with a fascinating Napoleonic fort as the setting. Music luminaries such as Radio 1's Rob da Bank have named Tunnel Vision one of the country's most original nights.

Saturday's event has been funded with a £2,000 bursary from the Smirnoff Night Vision initiative and has attracted a top line-up of DJs in house, techno, dubstep, breaks, deep house, funk and live electronica. The headline acts are two of the British electronic dance scene's brightest new stars, David E Sugar and Maidstone's own Jim Rivers (pictured).

While the fort's interior will be rocking to the 21st century's most cutting-edge sounds, outside visitors will be transported back to the Napoleonic era with military re-enactments, hog roasts and other historic entertainment.

Tickets are £12 to £15, plus booking fee. Go to www.clubtickets.com or call 0870 246 2050. More information about Tunnel Vision can be found on Facebook.



STEVE BROOKSTEIN

Saturday, August 8
Pizza Express, Maidstone



STEVE Brookstein will be proving that he still has the X-Factor five years on from his landmark win.

After attracting the most votes ever polled in the TV talent show to date, Brookstein was crowned the winner of the series in 2004. His debut single, a cover version of Phil Collins' Against All Odds, went straight to the number one spot and his first album was also a chart-topper.

But despite this early success, Brookstein claimed that the record company would not allow him to release an album of original songs and he decided to go it alone. His second album was not a commercial success, but it received critical acclaim and Brookstein is still entertaining audiences with his warm, soulful voice.

His wife, Eileen Hunter, has recently recorded her debut album which includes a duet with BBC Jazz Award winner Ian Shaw. They will be joining Brookstein at the concert in the Music Room at 7pm.

Tickets cost £20. Book online at www.pizza-expresslive.co.uk.



MAIDSTONE LEISURE

Have a go at drumming at music workshops

ASPIRING young musicians can try unusual instruments at Kent Music events taking place throughout August.

On Wednesday, August 5, ten to 16 year olds can take part in a steel drumming workshop from 9.30am-3.30pm. On Thursday, children and adults can try African drumming. The events are at Astley House in Maidstone.

For more information call 01622 691212 or email info@kent-music.com.

Visit the Underworld by joining the opera

PERFORMERS can journey into the underworld in Kentish Opera's next production.

The company needs dancers and chorus members to appear in Offenbach's Orpheus of the Underworld. For more information call Sally Langford on 01732 463284 or visit www.kentish-opera.fsnet.co.uk.

British Sea Power set to get Rocks rocking

BRITISH Sea Power will headline a day of live music at High Rocks in Tunbridge Wells on Sunday.

A Day at The Rocks, from 1pm to midnight, also features performances by Tom Williams and The Boat, Klaus (Says Buy The Record), The Help Movement, Allegro, Maker, Arrows of Love, Krissy and The Jackdaws, Tristram, Seven Story Down and a line-up of DJs.

Tickets, priced £16, are available from www.wegotickets.com.

Wishes come true in a BIG way in musical

A YOUNG boy learns that wishes can come true in BIG – The Musical.

Talented young performers present the musical based on the hit 80s film starring Tom Hanks at Hazlitt Theatre in Maidstone from tomorrow to Saturday.

Tickets cost £9/£7.50. Book online at www.hazlittartscentre.co.uk or call the box office on 01622 758611.

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BRÚNO (18)



Sacha Baron Cohen adopts the role of gay, crass, insolent fashionista Bruno from Austria, who tours the US looking to set up unsuspecting locals with his outrageous brand of 'interviewing'.

THE PRIVATE LIVES OF PIPPA LEE (15)



Robin Wright Penn stars as Pippa Lee, a woman heading for a mental breakdown after moving to a retirement village with her older husband, who has an affair with her friend's son.

When art imitated life for The Proposal's Sandra

■ BY KATE WHITING

FIVE years ago Sandra Bullock was single, heading for 40 and throwing herself into the Oscar-winning ensemble drama Crash.

Today she's married, stepmum to her tattooed biker-welder-husband's three kids and back on screens in a romantic comedy.

It's quite a turnaround, especially for an actress who used to believe marriage was a "death sentence". So what changed?

"I had everything I wanted, not realising that maybe I was going after things that weren't filling me up in the way I wanted," she says, candidly, when we meet in a London hotel to discuss her role as an unlikely bride in The Proposal.

"I never felt I was missing anything until one day I stopped long enough to smell the roses outside of this little treadmill I had gotten myself on to and I realised there were other things I liked that I didn't know."

In short, she fell in love with the right guy.

Sandra met Jesse James, apparently a real-life descendent of the American outlaw, and former presenter of the Discovery Channel's Monster Garage, when she arranged for her godson to meet him for a Christmas present.

They started dating and three months in she realised he was 'the one' – when he lay injured in a hospital bed after a racing accident.

"I always thought marriage meant that someone was going to ask you to stop being who you were and I met someone who not only wants me to be who I am, but likes it," says Sandra, beaming broadly.

In a bizarre case of art imitating life, Sandra's character in The Proposal, Margaret, is a workaholic boss who doesn't think she needs anything else in her life.



LIFE CHANGE: Sandra Bullock stars in The Proposal

But when the threat of deportation back to her native Canada means losing her job as an editor in a publishing company, she turns to her personal assistant Andrew (Ryan Reynolds) and blackmails him into marrying her.

Andrew reluctantly agrees, on the condition that she flies with him to Alaska to meet his family and celebrate his Grandma Annie's (Betty White) 90th birthday.

In real life, of course, Sandra is nothing like the hard-nosed, Christian Louboutin-wearing New Yorker Margaret – although she does look immaculate today in a white-and-black top, with her long dark hair tucked behind one shoulder to reveal a diamond earring.

And she is the 'older woman'. While Ryan, married to Scarlet Johansson, is 32, Sandra will be 45 later this month – although she hardly looks a day over 29 – the age she

VIEW THIS PREVIEW

yourkenttv.co.uk



was in her breakthrough role in 1994's Speed.

As she sucks on boiled sweets and lets out real belly laughs, it is clear she couldn't be an 'evil witch' if she tried.

Through roles in films like Miss Congeniality and Two Weeks Notice, Sandra – Sandy to her friends – became known as the comic actress who could play the girl-next-door, the tomboy and the sexy leading lady.

Due to having some bad experiences of comedy, she only agreed to do The Proposal if she could be executive producer.

As for her acting future, Sandra implies that she might not stick at it for the long haul, unlike her 87-year-old Proposal co-star Betty White.

"Most of what I do in my life doesn't happen in front of the camera and I love it just as much."

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LEGENDARY: Australian drum and bass superstars Pendulum will be joined by MC Jakes (above right) for the Dubbed Out bank holiday weekend special at the Loft in Maidstone

Pendulum are holiday hits at drum and bass night

AUSTRALIA'S most cherished export since Foster's will headline a stellar night of drum and bass next month.

Pendulum will perform the main DJ set at 666's Dubbed Out Bank Holiday weekend special at The Loft in Maidstone.

The six-piece – famed for big bass hits such as Granite, Propane Nightmares and Slam – will be backed by their UK tour master of ceremonies, MC Jakes, up-and-coming dubstep act 16 Bit and regular Dubbed Out residents Midnight Flight.

More acts are set to be added to the line-up.

■ BY SIMON ROBINSON

A 666 spokesman said: "It's the sixth instalment of Kent's biggest dubstep and drum and bass night."

"Pendulum are fast becoming legendary for their high-driven live shows and their DJ sets match the live band for their innovation and all-round energy."

"And yes, Perth's one and only Pendulum, the hottest drum and bass act on the planet, will be hitting The Loft and smashing out their rolling beats with MC Jakes."

"Expect breakdowns, beats, rewinds, wildly

remade tracks, fresh remixes and crazy, live mixing skills."

There are two 666 club nights at The Loft; the specialist electro/house/rave Spank night and the dubstep/drum and bass/experimental sounds of Dubbed Out.

The next Spank night is on Saturday, August 15, with Jack Beats – featuring the Scratch Perverts' DJ Plus One – taking to the turntables. Support comes from Matt Cox, Twisted DJs and Hijak Allstars.

Dubbed Out takes place on Saturday, August 29.

Get tickets at www.wegotickets.com/event/53563 for just £10. Entry costs £12 on the door. The nights runs from 10pm to 4am.

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MAIDSTONE SHOPPING

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ICONIC designs of the 20th century can be admired at Bagham Barn Antiques in Chilham, near Canterbury.

This weekend the shop launches a brand new 20th century design studio, featuring some of the most striking pieces created over the last 100 years. This new studio appears alongside Bagham Barn's stock of fine antique furniture, collectables and art.

For more information call 07780 675201 or see www.baghambarn.com.

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YOUNG shoppers can try out their sporting skills with a special event at Bluewater next week.

On Tuesday and Wednesday next week Robinsons Fruit Shoot will be inviting children to learn new football tricks, have a go at ping cup and jump to it with a skipping rope, then take part in competitions.

The event runs from 10am to 9pm both days. For details about Robinsons Fruit Shoot see www.fruitshoot.com.

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See www.skinblossom.co.uk.

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YOUR TV REVIEW

■ BY JAMES ALEXANDRE

HEADSHRINKERS OF THE AMAZON

Five
SUPERSIZERS, ANCIENT
ROME

BBC Two, 12.20am, Friday

FIVE upped the stakes with Channel 4 in the ever-more-provocative and outrageous programme titles race with its Thursday night offering – Headshrinkers of the Amazon.

Reporter Piers Gibbon found himself in a remote Ecuadorian village in search of shamen, with the possibility that his own brain would come back reduced, rather than enlightened, by the experience.

Fortunately, and perhaps unsurprisingly, he escaped unscathed and the Shuar villagers seemed more than welcoming, no doubt not used to having too many Western visitors these days.

The most disturbing part of it all was archive footage by a Polish explorer, Edmundo Bielawski, of an apparent head-shrinking ritual in motion, which was the cause for Gibbon's foray into the rainforest.

Perhaps this is how people who tune into rolling news coverage feel? The 1960s flickering images from the old film added to the eeriness of it all.

The programme later unravels the continuing black market trade in 'tsantsas' or officially shrunk head collectibles, all rather gruesome but nevertheless watchable.

The most poignant moment came when Gibbon met the widow of a man who disappeared after criticising the shamen's ritual, never to be seen again.

Definitely thought-provoking, but not while eating your boiled potatoes and green beans.

That particular fare is not something the Supersizers, aka Giles



GRUB'S UP: Sue Perkins and Giles Coren will sample the delights of Roman food this week

Coren and Sue Perkins, will be likely to eat this week as they prepare to feast on the delights of ancient Rome for the last in the series.

They travel back to the early days of the Roman Empire to live on the food of the age and will inhabit a villa and don togas to scoff their faces through the culinary timeline of 44BC to 80AD.

What I like about this show is that even though it sticks to roughly the same formula each week the hosts are funny and the food cooked up for them is always intriguing.

The wartime episode, which showed how people got by on rations, with such delights as potato sandwiches forming part of an average diet, was especially interesting.

For the Rome experience, Italian chef and cookery writer Valentina Harris takes to a marble kitchen to rustle up delights such as the putrid-smelling fish sauce garum, the snack of iguana meat and other treats.

YOUR WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

BY RUSSELL GRANT



AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19)

DON'T throw your pearls to swine. Although you enjoy being generous with your resources you need to examine the reasons behind this behaviour. The minute you cut off the supply, fair-weather friends will drop you like a hot potato. You never know when your financial luck will run out.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aquarius** 09067-531762



TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21)

BUILDING your entire identity on a career isn't the best idea. You need to balance your life with other things. Granted, it's nice to be appreciated at work, but remember things always change. If you are suddenly left out in the cold, you'll need a place to go and lick your wounds.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Taurus** 09067-531753



LEO (Jul 24-Aug 23)

YOU may be putting too much stock in a close relationship. Being in love will not solve all of your problems. In fact, it can multiply them. You are too strong to be influenced or intimidated by anyone, but getting just the right balance will be a bit of a struggle, but well worth it.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Leo** 09067-531756



SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22)

YOU might be overreacting to some career pressure. Try keeping this situation in perspective. If your boss asks you to do the impossible, be ready to just say 'no' and explain why. The more rational you are, the easier it will be to compromise. You may be suffering from a lack of love in your life.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Scorpio** 09067-531759



PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)

DON'T give people too much credit this week. A secret enemy could be working against your interests. It's best to leave a paper trail of memos and advice notes for all of your work. That way, if somebody tries to take credit for it, you'll be able to prove who the true author is.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Pisces** 09067-531763



GEMINI (May 22-Jun 22)

YOU may be putting too much trust in an opinion. What's good for one person isn't necessarily right for you. Strive to find your identity in this situation. Settling down to a single relationship or job could make you miserable. Be ready to break ranks for the sake of your own happiness.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Gemini** 09067-531754



VIRGO (Aug 24-Sep 23)

OVERINDULGING in food or drink will leave you wacked out. You need to make some sensible choices about what you put into your body. It may be wise to avoid a friend who likes to party hard. If you've fallen into some bad habits, be prepared for someone close to lay the law down.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Virgo** 09067-531757



SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21)

PROMISING more than you can deliver will get you in trouble. You've always been proud of your total honesty. Think what will happen if people start doubting your word. There may be good intentions behind your vows, but it's important to be realistic about what you can and can't do.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Sagittarius** 09067-531760



ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20)

TRYING to fit in with the crowd could be a pain. If you're forced to choose between your conscience and being popular, be true to yourself. Some friends will accuse you of betrayal, but eventually they'll respect your decision. Blurting out a secret could get you in trouble.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aries** 09067-531752



CANCER (Jun 23-Jul 23)

IS debt spiralling out of control? It's time to take control of your finances. If you have a business or romantic partner who is being irresponsible with your joint resources, maybe it's time to open a personal account. Having your own nest egg is crucial to your emotional security.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Cancer** 09067-531755



LIBRA (Sep 24-Oct 23)

IT is possible to have too much fun. Shirking your responsibilities will make friends angry. If you've recently fallen in love, it will be hard to tear yourself away from your lover's side. But make more time for those who were there for you during the single days.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Libra** 09067-531758



CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20)

INSISTING others toe your line creates resentment. You need to respect peoples' differences. A placid person's angry outburst is a warning you have gone too far. Try being more sensitive to your surroundings. Listening will help you understand where others are coming from.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Capricorn** 09067-531761

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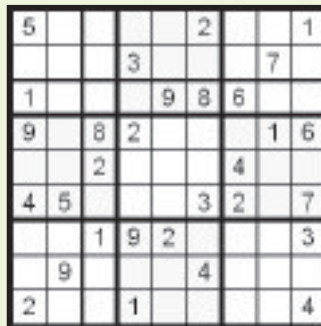


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Answers to all of this week's quizzes can be found on our website

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Regain your balance in Rockies

■ BY ROGER CROW

MY LUNGS were on fire as I forced one foot in front of the other. If exhaustion didn't get me, I wondered if a bear would.

Not that I'd seen one on my hour-long hike through the Canadian wilderness, but with plenty of warnings about such beasts in the area, I couldn't be too careful.

I'd hiked through the Rockies two years earlier and barely broken a sweat, so I wondered if the time between visits had left me out of shape.

"One more step and I'll reach the summit," I thought, but the track kept getting steeper, winding off into the distance. The roar of a cascading stream to my left was a driving soundtrack as I forced myself on.

With lungs gasping for breath, I reached my destination: the source of the waterfall – a sheer stone wall, water bubbling through the gap at its base.

At first sight, the hike had seemed simple until I realised later we were 7,200 feet above sea level. As Ben Nevis is an estimated 4,000 feet, it's little wonder I found it a struggle.

Based at peaceful Mount Engadine Lodge, half an hour's drive from one of Canada's most beautiful towns, Canmore, I was relieved to see our hosts had bear spray ready to ward off unwanted gatecrashers.

It's off the beaten track, and the lack of TVs and phone reception leaves some guests feeling a little cut-off, but if you want a break from civilisation, this is the perfect retreat.

After two idyllic days of picture-postcard views, I headed for Rafter Six Ranch Resort, between Calgary and Banff, for a horse ride to remember.



MAJESTIC: The Rockies make an impressive backdrop to views well worth hiking for, but don't forget bear spray

This three-and-a-half-hour trek was not for the faint of heart, and with an often-difficult course over tricky terrain, it made for a memorable, albeit taxing experience. Experienced riders will love it.

The following day was the summer solstice, a time for trying new things, as our yoga guide told us.

Icefield Tours, about two hours' drive from the heart of Banff, offers an unforgettable helicopter ride over some of the world's most breathtaking scenery. While some marry there, or go hiking, I was keen to try heli-yoga.

Our guide Martha was a tribute to the power of yoga. She turned 50 that week, but could have passed for mid-30s.

The breathtaking helicopter journey over winding aquamarine lakes and a sea of trees framed by the monumental Rockies was soon

balanced by utter calm. We touched down in a deserted field that would have looked at home in Little House On The Prairie.

It was an unlikely setting in which to be practising back arches, standing on one leg or 'saluting the sun'.

While having lunch by a babbling stream, I realised this was one of those rare trips which, unlike some of my yoga moves, was perfectly balanced.

Thanks to Martha's instructions, I alleviated my back pain and strengthened under-used muscles. It was one of the high points of this trip – or indeed any trip.

After three visits to Alberta, my ongoing love affair with this jewel in the Canadian crown shows no sign of abating. I may not have dropped a decade like my yoga guru did, but days there nudged my clock back a few weeks.

FACT FILE: CANADA

Time difference	- Five hours (GMT)
Capital	Ottawa
Languages	English and French
Population	34 million
Currency	£1 = 1.78 Canadian dollars
Religion	Roman Catholic and Protestant
Climate	Temperate to arctic

Travel information

Roger Crow was a guest of Travel Alberta and BA Holidays, which offers seven-night fly-drive packages into Calgary from £814 per person in summer 2009, incl return BA flights and Avis inclusive car hire. Ex-Manchester from £876, ex-Glasgow from £874, both via Heathrow. All prices assume two sharing.

BA Holidays reservations: 0844 493 0758 and visit ba.com (add £15pp surcharge for telephone bookings).

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PROPERTY NEWS

Call for regulation of buy-to-let investors

IN a recent poll of 550 mortgage brokers, more than half of respondents said they would like to see buy-to-let regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

A total of 54 per cent expressed that view in the light of the current property prices situation.

Research from mortgage specialist, Exact, also revealed that 63 per cent of brokers estimated that more than 75 per cent of their buy-to-let clients were amateur investors.

For two out of five respondents, the percentage soared to more than 90 per cent of amateur landlords.

Exact's managing director, Alan Cleary, is of the opinion that the ready mortgage finance and credit that existed until 2007 made it too easy for amateurs "without a commercial head on their shoulders" to enter the market.

He said: "It was a mistake to assume that because buy-to-let was viewed as a commercial endeavour, it could be left unregulated.

"The number of amateur landlords in the private rented sector with sizeable portfolios now well under water is proof of the fact."

Don't miss out on cash help for first-timers

FIRST-time buyers are being urged not to miss out on a share of £3.4 million which can help them on to the property ladder.

The money includes £1.7 million of Government funding for an initiative aimed at reducing the cost of homebuying and must be allocated before the end of this year.

"The scheme is called HomeBuy Direct and it dramatically reduces the initial purchase cost of a house and improves your chance of owning your own home," said Tim Nabbs, sales director for Ward Homes.

"We have around £1.7 million of Government funding, together with our own contribution of £1.7 million, which totals £3.4 million that has to be spent on HomeBuy Direct this year.

"I would advise people to come and talk to us to find out if they are eligible and we can answer any queries and help with the paperwork."

The scheme is open to a range of people who don't own their own home.

Households eligible will be earning more than £15,000 and less than £60,000.



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Prices raised as buyers increase in confidence

■ BY NICK AMES

HOME-SELLERS raised their asking prices this month to meet increased demand from buyers, according to the operator of the UK's biggest residential property website.

The average cost of a home rose 0.6 per cent to £227,864 after falling 0.4 per cent in June, Rightmove said in a statement.

The housing market is showing signs of recovery from the worst economic contraction in a generation after officials rescued banks and started printing money.

"With growing confidence that we've passed the bottom, buyers are more active, although they may discover that many of the best buys have gone," Miles Shippide, commercial director of Rightmove, said in the statement.

Seven of ten regions tracked by Rightmove rose this month.

The average number of properties available for sale at each estate agent fell to 70 per cent from 71 in June.

At the same time the number of people looking at property listings on the site is "much higher than we would expect" for this time of year, Rightmove said.

UK mortgage approvals rose to 43,414 in May, up from 27,000 in November, the least since Bank of England data began a decade ago.

The reading is still about a third less than at the start of 2008.

The Bank of England has cut the benchmark interest rate to a record low of 0.5 per cent and is buying £125 billion of bonds with newly-created money to ease lending strains.

Prime Minister Gordon Brown has spent billions of pounds rescuing banks.



"With only seven volume lenders remaining in the lending game, including three Government-backed institutions that are prioritising their balance sheets over new lending, we are set to bump along the bottom for some time yet," Mr Shippide said.

The economy will grow 0.5 per cent next year, up from a previous forecast for a 0.1 per

cent contraction, according to experts who use the same forecasting model as the Treasury.

They predict Gross Domestic Product will drop 4.4 per cent this year, more than an earlier estimate of 3.5 per cent.

Repossessions may total 17,494 in the third quarter, up from 17,049 in the three months through June.

Get deposit to secure mortgage

LOWER house prices should be good news for first-time buyers, but research shows that to secure a mortgage, they need an average deposit of £32,000.

Since the onset of the credit crunch almost two years ago, lenders have significantly tightened their lending criteria and the number of deals has been dwindling.

The best deals are saved for those with a hefty deposit – at least 25 per cent of buyers.

Research from moneysupermarket.com, the price comparison website, shows that some 13 per cent of 18 to 34 year olds are now thinking about buying their first home.

However, just 25 per cent of potential buyers have saved a deposit, which leaves three-quarters wondering where the money will come from. Many are relying on the 'bank of mum and dad'.

The figures show 16 per cent are thinking about taking out a loan to cover the cost of the deposit, but Louise Cuming, head of mortgages at moneysupermarket.com, warns that this is risky.

Ms Cuming said: "Taking out a loan to pay for a mortgage deposit is a dangerous move and must be avoided, even if it means you have to delay buying your first home."

She explained that if the lender discovers where the deposit came from, the mortgage application could be rejected.

In related news, house-builders Bovis, Redrow, Barratt and Persimmon last week highlighted that the lack of mortgage finance continued to hinder a recovery in the housing market.

The latest figures from the Council of Mortgage Lenders show that mortgage lending improved in May.

However, the number of home loans was still 28 per cent lower than it was this time last year.

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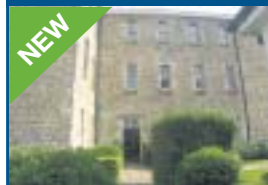
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Extended three bedroom, double glazing, gas central heating, conservatory

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Kingswood £209,995

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Harrietsham £199,000

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Coxheath £189,995

Two bed bungalow. Lounge/dining room, enclosed garden, popular location

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Coxheath £170,000

Three bedroom semi-detached with modern kitchen, garden and no chain

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Penenden Heath £165,000

Two bedroom semi with bathroom, modern kitchen/diner. Driveway and garage

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Maidstone £159,995

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Maidstone £157,995

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Maidstone £155,000

Two bedroom Victorian style house. Double glazing, gas central heating

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Bearsted £147,500

One bedroom ground floor retirement flat, double glazing, no chain

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48 KINGFISHER MEADOW, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME16
We are acting for the mortgagees and have received an offer of £120,000 on the above property. Any interested parties must submit any higher offers in writing to the selling agent before an exchange of contracts takes place.

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Harrietsham £99,950

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Maidstone Offers in excess of £325,000
A detached home with four double bedrooms. The property has a stunning be-spoke fitted kitchen which is open plan to the dining room. Living room and conservatory. There is also a utility room, downstairs shower room and bathroom.



Maidstone £145,000
Ideal for first time buyer or buy to let investors. Two bedroom home. The property has a lounge/dining room and family bathroom. Garden, gas central heating and double glazing.



Maidstone Offers in excess of £155,000
Two double bedroom house. No chain. Refitted kitchen diner. GCH & DG. Village location.



Maidstone Asking Price £185,000
An improved and full width extended three bedroom. There is a modern fitted kitchen and bathroom, central heating and double glazing. Living room, dining room, cloakroom and utility cupboard.

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Maidstone Asking Price £169,995
A first floor two bedroom apartment which was a show home. Serviced by a lift, on site concierge and is in a security conscious gated development. This home has one ensuite & living room with doors to the balcony.



Maidstone £249,950
A modern detached three bedroom home with various upgrades to original specification including an enhanced kitchen with granite work surfaces, alarm system and floor coverings.



Maidstone Offers in excess of £280,000
Improved four bedroom Victorian home. Re-fitted kitchen and rear garden. The lounge with open fireplace and dining room. There is a downstairs cloakroom and a family bathroom.



Maidstone £150,000
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Tonbridge



OIRO £140,000

Semi-rural location, lounge, dining room, office plus kitchen, three bedrooms and bathroom.

Maidstone



£159,995

Three bedroom family home in a cul de sac, kitchen/breakfast room, lounge and bathroom, chain free.

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OIEO £200,000

Converted ragstone bungalow, lounge/diner, kitchen with space for dining table, two bedrooms and bathroom.

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£219,995

Three bedroom semi detached house, garage, gardens, two receptions and en suite.

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OIEO £225,000

Three bedroom family home comprising lounge/diner, cloakroom, en suite to master, family bathroom.

Maidstone



£250,000

Four bedroom family home, no chain, ideal for both M20 and M2, lounge, dining room, conservatory and en suite.

Maidstone



£275,000

Three bedroom Cox style home situated in one of the most sought after roads, landscaped garden and conservatory.

Maidstone



£475,000

Tree lined avenue, open plan reception areas & hallway, kitchen, utility room, four bedrooms and en suite.

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OIEO £550,000

Unique five bedroom detached house in a cul de sac, six reception areas plus double garage.



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MOTORS NEWS



Different strengths of Euro and Japanese cars

HONDA and Skoda hit the heights in a survey by extended guarantee insurance specialist, Warranty Direct, of the most reliable three to six-year-old cars.

The Japanese brand emerged as the least likely to break down, while Mazda, Toyota, Subaru, Nissan and Mitsubishi also figured in the top ten.

But when it came to the cost of repairs, Czech brand Skoda was cheapest with an annual bill averaging £215.94. Other European marques also tended to be easier on the pocket once they went wrong.



Some tempting deals on wheels from Nissan

NISSAN is tempting recession-hit consumers with a range of compelling deals until September 30, including a £1,000 discount on the newly launched five-door Pixo (from £5,995) city car.

This comes on top of low emissions qualifying the car for £35/year road tax fee and an average of 60+mpg.

Special editions of the low-cost Micra and Note (pictured) hatchbacks offer high-spec n-tec trim and Nissan is also making low deposit zero per cent finance and personal contract deals available across many models, as well as Government-sponsored scrappage offers.



Ceed seen in new light

KIA has unveiled a smart new look for its popular Ceed family hatchback and, in doing so, confirmed the Korean brand's new corporate face.

The mid-life facelift freshens both the inside and outside of the car that has put Kia on the map with UK buyers in the past couple of years, helped by an astonishing seven-year warranty.

The new-look car should appear in showrooms later this summer and will herald more new Kia models – with the smarter front end – early next year.



SHAPE SHIFTER: Seat have basically taken the previous generation Audi A4 and reworked it to produce the reborn Exeo, saving them the costs of developing an entirely new car

The audacious planning of 'Audi for Seat money'

ROAD TEST SEAT EXEO

BY STEVE LOADER

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Green rating	★★★★★

Despite a Seat grille and some styling tweaks, it can't help looking like a 'dodgy Audi' or suffering from the A4's relatively cramped rear seating. But this is quibbling when compared with the benefits: pricing, peerless build quality, safety, reliability, a high quality cabin – ported over from the even more premium A4 Cabriolet rather than the saloon/estate – a decent boot and a terrific drive.

The last deserves most praise; Seat engineers chose to change the sporty chassis set-up of the Audi, which could be irritatingly firm in everyday use. There is still a Sport option, but our test car had Seat's standard set-up, which delivers a refined ride and responsive handling even on challenging roads.

Our mid-range SE spec car, with its entry level 2.0-litre 143PS/141bhp turbodiesel (£18,340) and six-speed gearbox also impressed with its liveliness, excellent cabin refinement and motorway composure – it should also average more than 50mpg.

Equipment levels are lavish, with our SE including cruise control, iPod/MP3 port, Bluetooth phone connectivity and voice control, rain sensing wipers, dual-zone climate control and smart alloys.



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USED CAR ROUND-UP: OUR PICK FROM A KEY SECTOR

MERCEDES E-CLASS



MAYBE it is the most staid of our trio, but the E-Class claims the highest swank value. Nothing beats a three-pointed star on the bonnet at this level. Reliability and quality has been excellent, though the halo slipped on the previous 2002-2009 range (pictured) until a facelift in 2006. Ride and handling is more in the 'comfort zone', but the E-Class is nimble enough and the estate is a cavernous and luxurious load-lugger. Excellent diesel engines complete a tempting package.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

AUDI A6



UNTIL the current A6 range, Audi's 'management motor' struggled to match its German rivals for style and image, though fit and finish was beyond reproach. However, examples built before the current 2004 line-up (pictured) can still be incredible bargains. Unless you buy the more expensive quattro versions though, an A6 means front-wheel drive. Ride and comfort also tends towards hard and 'sporting', but the A6 offers excellent powertrains, particularly diesels.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

BMW 5-SERIES



BMW and its charismatic badge enjoy the most aspirational image with buyers and much credit goes to the 5-Series – a big car yet famed for its handling. The previous incarnation (pictured) laid the foundations for that and many people still prefer its reserved styling to the looks of its successor. The 5-Series also boasts some excellent engines, though chronically underpowered four-cylinder petrol ex-company car variants are best avoided – whatever the price.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

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Senior & General Appointments 41-44

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Closing date: 12 noon on Tuesday 4th August 2009

MidKent College

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint outstanding individuals in the following areas:

Lecturer in Musical Theatre

Ref: P0654

Salary: £20,700 - £29,622 pro rata
18.5 hours per week

The Performing Arts department is looking for an experienced professional to teach on its Musical Theatre programmes. Working with students in both Music and Performing Arts the successful candidate would play a key role in the rehearsal and production process of performances. Knowledge and experience of the industry is essential. The successful candidate will hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification.

Lecturer in Business Management (Higher Education)

Ref: P0653

Salary: £20,700 - £29,622 pro rata
18.5 hours per week

MidKent College is looking to recruit an exceptional candidate with an innovative and enthusiastic approach to contribute to the teaching of a range of Higher Education Business Management programmes. The successful candidate will have excellent communication skills and working knowledge of the Further/Higher Education sector, and hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification.

Closing date: Wednesday 19 August 2009

MidKent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition in the application, interview and employment with the college. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

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Please email CV and covering letter to
 robsnow@bannatyne.co.uk
 closing date 26th July 2009.

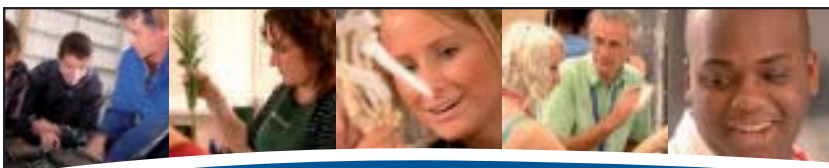


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Career Opportunities



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Canterbury College is a Further and Higher Education College in the heart of Kent. Our goal is to be one of the best FE Colleges in England by 2010. We have 9,000 students across 300 courses and enjoy an enviable reputation as a great place to learn. Our brand new £50M Campus is also home to nearly 800 staff and we have some great career opportunities which may be right for you.

Coordinator Theatre Production Arts across Levels 1,2 and 3 courses in Dance and Dramatic Arts	09/35
18.5 hours per week, salary starting at £27,209 pro rata per annum.	
Lecturer Physics	09/45
37 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 per annum.	
Lecturer Health & Social Care	07/81
18.5 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum.	
Lecturer Play Work/Early years	09/41
18.5 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum. One year fixed term post.	
Temporary Lecturer Animal Care and Veterinary Nursing	08/42
37 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 per annum. Fixed term post to cover maternity leave not to exceed one year.	
Lecturer Animal Care and Land Based	01/144
18.5 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum.	
Lecturer Key Skills	07/30
37 or 2 x 18.5 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 per annum (pro rata for part time posts).	
Lecturer Electrical Installation	09/26
37 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 per annum.	
Supply Lecturers Higher Education Graphic Design to teach HND and BA (Hons) Graphic Design and Advertising	S/HE/GD
Various hours available, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum.	
You will have a minimum of a good first degree in a relevant area of design and demonstrate a willingness to contribute to the development of the HE graphic design programmes. Specialist knowledge of typography, editorial design, branding and/or interactive design are essential. You should be able to offer ongoing support to guidance with project work and degree level student dissertations.	
International Manager	08/111
37 hours per week, salary starting at £33,858 per annum.	
College Receptionist	R1
22.25 hours per week, salary starting at £15,085 pro rata per annum.	
Night Cleaners	09/22
5 posts, 20 hours each per week, salary £6.42 per hour. Temporary posts to cover maternity leave not to exceed 12 months.	

The closing date for the above posts is Monday 03 August 2009 at 12 noon

For an information pack please visit www.canterburycollege.ac.uk or call the Human Resources Office on 01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone) quoting the above reference.

Staff benefits include:

- Pension & Life Assurance Scheme
- Proximity to main bus & train stations
- Close to City Centre
- Sports Hall & Gym
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Career Opportunities

Sheppey College is an equal opportunities employer



Sheppey College is a satellite of Canterbury College and has been open since 1996. We offer a variety of courses in a modern and friendly learning environment and enjoy excellent rates of success.

Vocational Team Leader Construction	SH/VCT5
18.5 hours per week, salary starting at £27,209 pro rata per annum.	
Lecturer Hairdressing	09/46 & 09/47
2 x posts at 18.5 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum. One Year Fixed Term Posts.	
Lecturer Construction	09/48
18.5 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum.	
Lecturer Administration	09/49
9.25 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum.	
Lecturer ICT	09/50
9.25 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum.	
Trainer Demonstrator Construction	07/07
18.5 hours per week, 38 weeks term time. Salary starting at £18,963 pro rata per annum.	

The closing date for the above posts is Monday 03 August 2009 at 12 noon

For an information pack please visit www.canterburycollege.ac.uk or call the Human Resources Office on 01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone) quoting the above reference.

Staff benefits include:

- Pension & Life Assurance Scheme
- Proximity to main bus & train stations
- Generous Holiday Allowance
- Close to Town Centre



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CALL
 01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone)



MidKent College

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint an outstanding individual in the following area:

Hourly Paid Lecturers

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint outstanding individuals in the following areas:

Sessional Lecturers

Hourly rate: £20.37 - £27.17

Beauty Therapy	Electrical Installation
Plumbing/Heating	Health Care
Carpentry	Child Care
Public Services	Sport
Business Management (Higher Education)	Brickwork
Catering	Sociology
Biology	Chemistry
Psychology	

Closing date: Friday 14 August 2009

MidKent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition in the application, interview and employment with the college. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

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Closing date for applications: 27th July 2009

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Closing Date: 2nd August 2009



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Website: www.ifielschool.com

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To discuss your interest in this post or for additional information, please call Ken Pullan on 07725128661. Completed applications should be forwarded to ken.pullan@midkent.ac.uk

Closing date: 10th August 2009



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CRICKET

BY GLENN PEARSON

Kent League Division Five

Bapchild 1st XI v Offham 1st XI

A STUNNING spell of 7 for 20 from left-arm seamer Matt Roche paved the way to a 114-run win for Bapchild against Offham.

With the majority of the wickets across Kent being slow and low as a result of the heavy rain that flooded the county the previous day, Bapchild proved to be no different as runs were hard to come by.

Having won the toss, Offham unsurprisingly inserted the home side and were rewarded almost instantly when Leonard Watt picked up opener Ricky Dale for just three.

Lee Taylor (36) and skipper Ben Fulton (23) helped steady the ship for the Swale side before Graham Razey came on first change and the tide began to turn. He picked both Taylor and Fulton and then Alan Hampton for 17.

Adam Larking looked well set and hit 39 at number five, but Razey continued his fine spell by claiming the wicket of Lee Cogger.

John Heatley scored a battling unbeaten 35 to ensure Bapchild would record a competitive total as they ended on 180 all out with eight balls to spare. Razey was the pick of the Offham attack with figures of 5 for 41.

It proved to be good enough as Offham struggled against an attack that included Roche in inspired form. He bowled 13 overs off the reel to claim 7 for 20 as only two Offham batsmen managed to record double figures. Alex Ward took 1 for 5 from six overs as Offham capitulated to 66 all out.

Offham batsmen blown away by rocket Roche



BATTERED: Offham's batsmen couldn't cope with Bapchild left-arm seamer Matt Roche, who laid waste to them during spell of 7 for 20

SCOREBOARD

Bapchild

	Runs
Lee Taylor ct T Gittings b Razey	36
Ricky Dale ct B Gittings b Watt	3
Ben Fulton ct Hallbrook b Razey	23
Alan Hampton ct T Gittings b B Gittings	17
Adam Larking ct T Gittings b B Gittings	39
Lee Cogger ct T Gittings b Razey	1
John Heatley not out	35
Dave Wassell b Razey	1
Alex Ward ct Razey b B Gittings	0
Matthew Roche b B Gittings	0
Joshua Hunt b Blakeburn	10

Extras (6b 5lb 2w 2nb)	15
Total (all out, 48.3 overs)	180

Bowlers

	O	M	R	W
Leonard Watt	13	5	34	1
Phil Blakeburn	8.3	1	47	1
Graham Razey	15	3	41	5
Simon Hallbrook	5.3	1	20	0
Mervyn Brooker	2	0	11	0
Ben Gittings	4	0	16	3

Offham

	Runs
Leonard Watt ct Dale b Roche	16
Tom Gittings b Ward	0
Ben Gittings ct Hunt b Roche	20
Lawrence Bell b Roche	8
Mervyn Brooker run out	0
Nathan Faulkes not out	9
Graham Razey b Roche	2
Phil Blakeburn ct Larking b Hampton	5
Nathan Brooker lbw b Roche	3
Daniel Kent b Roche	0
Simon Hallbrook b Roche	1

Extras (2b)	2
Total (all out, 39.2 overs)	66

Bowlers

	O	M	R	W
Joshua Hunt	5	2	9	0
Alex Ward	6	4	5	1
Alan Hampton	15	5	30	1
Matthew Roche	13.2	5	20	7

LOCAL CRICKET ROUND-UP

KENT LEAGUE DIVISION ONE

Orpington 1st XI v The Mote 1st XI

A DEVASTATING spell of 5 for 9 from Tom Harvey paved the way for a four-wicket win for The Mote.

Harvey proved unplayable as Orpington were bowled out for a disappointing 103, with Mote skipper Glen Aukett also weighing in with 3 for 29.

In reply, James Marriott hit a solid 25 at the top of the innings before James Hodgson anchored the Mote's reply with a measured 45. The visitors lost a few wickets towards the end as Orpington's Michael Knight returned figures of 4 for 8, but managed to get home with 15 overs to spare.

Orpington

	Runs
Patrick Joseph lbw b Aukett	15
Dylan Robertson ct Thirkell b Aukett	24
Christopher Watts ct Marriott b Aukett	11
Paul Schmidt b Rowe	1
Simon Whitehead ct Fordham b Waters	1
Sam Clarkson ct Daley b Harvey	23
David Robinson ct Valjee b Harvey	0
Alex Watts ct Aukett b Harvey	4
Michael Knight lbw b Harvey	2
Richard Hall b Harvey	4
Stephen Ingram not out	0

Extras (2b 6lb 8w 2nb)	18
Total (all out, 46.3 overs)	103

Bowlers

	O	M	R	W
Kym Daley	8	1	22	0
Glen Aukett	15	4	29	3
Danny Rowe	6	1	16	1
Laurence Waters	9	1	19	1
Tom Harvey	8.3	4	9	5

The Mote

	Runs
James Marriott b Knight	25
Tom Harvey b Schmidt	3
James Hodgson ct Hall b Watts	45
Daniel Thirkell lbw b Knight	0
Umesh Valjee not out	10
Chris Back lbw b Knight	2
Glen Aukett Knight	3
Laurence Waters not out	0
Kym Daley did not bat	
Danny Rowe did not bat	
Alex Fordham did not bat	

Extras (4b 1lb 10w 1nb)	16
Total (6 wickets, 34.4 overs)	104

Bowlers

	O	M	R	W
Stephen Ingram	4	1	17	0
Paul Schmidt	9	1	28	1
Sam Clarkson	2	0	6	0
Dylan Robertson	8	1	31	0
Michael Knight	8	4	8	4
Alex Watts	3.4	1	9	1

KENT LEAGUE DIVISION FOUR

Addington Village 1st XI v Bexleyheath 1st XI

ADDINGTON Village remain on course for the Division Four title after a routine 130-run against Bexleyheath at the weekend.

Ben Buet top scored for the villagers with 69 while several other batsmen all chipped in with scores to help the home side set a respectable 218 for 8 from their 50 overs.

Jo Pigott then claimed two quick wickets with the new ball before Buet came on second change to again take the plaudits with figures of 4 for 6. Mat Bruton also took 2 for 7 as Bexleyheath were bowled out for just 88.

Addington Village

	Runs
Mark Rimmer ct Wiseman b Woods	7
Ben Buet ct Heath b Patel	69
James Tooze ct Wiseman b Woods	0
Will Jeffery ct Woodgate b Bone	24
Duncan Brown ct Shears b Woods	29
Neil Scott ct Wiseman b Patel	16
Mat Bruton ct Shears b Meeking	25
Joe Pigott not out	22
James Fullagar b Meeking	3
Dan Walton not out	3
Harry Smither did not bat	

Extras (4b 3lb 4w 9nb)	20
Total (8 wickets, 50 overs)	218

Bowlers

	O	M	R	W
David Meeking	15	1	41	2
Jack Woods	13	1	63	3
Tom Beaumont	7	1	28	0
Phillip Bone	6	0	31	1
Ravi Patel	9	0	48	2

Bexleyheath

	Runs
Phil Wiseman ct Bruton b Scott	12
Pat Heath ct Scott b Pigott	0
Raj Patel ct Bruton b Pigott	0
Ravi Patel ct Tooze b Walton	11
Chris Shears ct Jeffery b Bruton	33
Russell Allen not out	4
Tom Beaumont b Bruton	0
Archie Woodgate b Buet	3
Jack Woods ct Walton b Buet	0
David Meeking ct Jeffery b Buet	0
Phillip Bone ct Tooze b Buet	0

Extras (1b 7lb 10w 7nb)	25
Total (all out, 32.4 overs)	88

Bowlers

	O	M	R	W
Joe Pigott	5	0	12	2
Dan Walton	10	1	35	1
Neil Scott	8	2	20	1
Mat Bruton	6	4	7	2
Ben Buet	3.4	1	6	4

KENT PREMIER DIVISION - 2ND XI

The Mote 2nd XI v Dartford 2nd XI

THE Mote 2s fell just ten runs short of an unlikely victory at Dartford. Having reduced the visitors to 202 for 7, with Richard Coles and Matthew White each claiming two wickets apiece, the Mote's reply didn't start well as they lost Peter Bowles and Howard Waters early on.

However, a superb battling 55 not out from Alan Barr saved the day as he and Matthew White (53) looked as though they were batting their side to victory until Surge Singh came on and took 4 for 58.

In the end the Mote just about hung on with a wicket to spare as Dartford claimed a winning draw.

Dartford

	Runs
Jeremy Dasarath c & b R Coles	21
Joe Murphy retired	0
Ross Hallam ct C Coles b R Coles	21
Kevin Webb ct C Coles b Field	59
Randy Rampersad run out	39
Lee Gray b White	6
Pavan Bali run out	21
Viraj Bist ct Field b White	8
Mark Baker not out	2
Mark Collier not out	7
Surge Singh did not bat	

Extras (4b 5lb 6w 3nb)	18
Total (7 wickets, 50 overs)	202

Bowlers

	O	M	R	W
Richard Coles	15	5	29	2
Matthew White	10	1	39	2
Jack Field	15	1	59	1
Richard Usher	6	0	37	0
Christopher Bell	4	0	29	0

The Mote

	Runs
Peter Bowles lbw b Gray	6
Matthew White ct Dasarath b Collier	53
Howard Waters b Gray	15
Alan Barr not out	55
Richard Coles st Hallam b Singh	24
Jason Dunk b Collier	3
Norman Ali b Collier	11
Jack Field ct Baker b Singh	0
Christopher Bell b Singh	0
Richard Usher ct Rampersad b Singh	15
Chris Coles not out	0

Extras (2b 2lb 7w)	11
Total (9 wickets, 50 overs)	193

Bowlers

	O	M	R	W
Viraj Bist	10	2	33	0
Mark Baker	5	0	27	0
Lee Gray	6	0	26	2
Mark Collier	15	1	45	3
Surge Singh	14	2	58	4

KENT FEEDER LEAGUE EAST 1A

Yalding 1st XI v Cowdrey 1st XI

LEWIS Wright's unbeaten 102 proved the difference as Yalding went down by 31 runs at the weekend.

Wright hit six fours and six maximums as he put Yalding's bowlers to the sword. Only Muhammad Rafiq proved effective as he finished with figures of 1 for 24 from his 15 overs, but Cowdrey still went on to score 244 for 5.

Usman Pervaiz top scored for Yalding in reply as he hit eight fours and four sixes on his way to 66, and despite an unbeaten 38 from skipper Shumshair Haider and 29 not out from Rafiq, Yalding dropped short on 213 for 7.

Cowdrey

	Runs
Andrew Hammond b Rafiq	44
Jack Southwart ct Haider b Pervaiz	2
Glen Warner ct Hutchins b Shepherd	15
Lewis Wright not out	102
Ian Scott run out	21
Chris Jones ct Haider b Robinson	20
Jack Mutch not out	18
Will Needham did not bat	
Rob Fenwick did not bat	
Phil Sullivan did not bat	
Gary Marshall did not bat	

Extras (7b 7lb 1w 7nb)	22
Total (5 wickets, 46 overs)	244

Bowlers

	O	M	R	W
Usman Pervaiz	8	0	54	1
Anthony Shepherd	7	1	36	1
Muhammad Rafiq	12	5	24	1
James Emmitt	4	0	19	0
Jumshad Haider	9	2	44	0
Rustam Haider	3	0	29	0
Andrew Robinson	3	0	24	1

Yalding

	Runs
James Emmitt ct Warner b Fenwick	8
Graham Hutchins b Jones	13
Scott Walker st Mutch b Needham	18
Usman Pervaiz ct Warner b Needham	66
Alistair Ratcliff ct Warner b Marshall	0
Rustam Haider ct Jones b Sullivan	17
Shumshair Haider not out	38
Jumshad Haider ct Warner b Sullivan	11
Muhammad Rafiq not out	29
Anthony Shepherd did not bat	
Andrew Robinson did not bat	

Extras (5lb 8w)	13
Total (7 wickets, 46 overs)	213

Bowlers

	O	M	R	W
Chris Jones	11	4	40	1
Rob Fenwick	8	1	36	1
Phil Sullivan	8	2	49	2
Will Needham	10	0	47	2
Gary Marshall	7	1	22	1
Ian Scott	2	0	14	0

Invicta rowers save best for championships

ROWING

MAIDSTONE Invicta Rowing Club's junior section enjoyed success at the National Championship in Nottingham by picking up four medals.

Despite varied conditions, the Maidstone Invicta squad produced some of the best performances of the season. Invicta picked up two gold medals on the last day of the championships with a stunning effort in the open junior coxless fours and coxless pairs.

With two medals already in the bag, Maidstone Invicta picked up two more with a silver medal in the coxed fours and a bronze in the under-15 double sculls.

Stuart Hampshire and Chris Mollison came close to picking up a medal in the open double sculls, but missed out in a tight racing by finishing fifth.

Head coach Ray Long was delighted with the success at the championships and is shocked by how far the club has come in its 25-year history.



MEDAL HAUL: Maidstone Invicta shone at the National Championships, picking up four medals including two golds

He said: "The results were not only a credit to the hard work and dedication put in by the athletes, but also reflect on the incredible support of both the coaches and parents. This has been a very long and hard season, but the results speak volumes about the club."

Following the performances at the

National Championships, the club had further cause for celebration with 12 junior rowers selected to compete for Great Britain.

Morgan Hellen, Josh Pendry and James Crumpton have been included in Great Britain's eight crew to compete at the Coupe de la Jeunesse European match in France this weekend.

ATHLETICS



NEW TRACK: Medway & Maidstone Athletic Club chairman Paul Alcock at the site of the new circuit

Four-minute man Bannister to open new running track

THE first athlete to run a four-minute mile, Sir Roger Bannister, will open Medway & Maidstone Athletics Club's new track at Sutton Valence in September.

Bannister is one of Great Britain's greatest athletes and was the first man to complete the feat of running a mile under four minutes in 1954.

To run a mile under four minutes was thought to be impossible at the time and although his time was broken soon after, Bannister's achievement is one of the most famous in athletics history.

The 75-year-old will take part in the new athletics facilities opening ceremony, which will take place on September 22.

The facility situated at Sutton Valence School has been partly funded by the school, Maidstone council and Medway & Maidstone AC at a cost of £800,000.

Finest

The track will be one of the finest in the county and has been earmarked as a training venue for the 2012 London Olympics.

The building process started in March and the facility is on schedule to be completed next month.

Once opened the facility will host a number of competitions and will be open to club members five days a week. Training sessions for the public will also be held at the track.

Sutton Valence School's incoming headmaster, Bruce Grindlay, said: "There has been an extraordinary amount of development at the school in the past four years.

"The new athletics track is the latest in a long line of investments which will benefit not only our students, but the local community.

"We as a school are proud of our sporting heritage and traditions and it is a great honour for us to be able to welcome Sir Roger Bannister to officially open the new track."



Picture: STEVE TERRELL

READY: Maidstone striker Meshach Nugent should be fit in time for the first game of the season despite missing all of the Stones' pre-season matches so far

Walker brings a Bottle in bid to boost Stones' squad

A KEY signing is how Maidstone United joint-manager Alan Walker described bringing young winger Jimmy Bottle to the Ryman Premier League club.

The Stones completed the capture of the former Ashford Town player last Friday and he becomes the fifth summer signing to join the club, following Nick Barnes, Jamie Turner, Alan Pouton and Peter Hawkins.

Walker admitted he is glad to sign the 19-year-old after coming close to bringing him to Maidstone last season.

He said: "Obviously we are delighted we have got him. We tried to sign him last year,

FOOTBALL

■ BY TOM HOWARD

but he decided to join Ashford. His pace will certainly cause people problems this season. I can see him playing a role similar to that of Nick Hegley who used to play for us."

Former Ebbsfleet United and Margate midfielder Danny Stubbs has impressed Walker in pre-season and was due to hold talks with him following the friendly at Chatham Town last night (Tuesday).

The Stones picked up their first pre-season win with a comfortable 3-0 victory against

Ryman South side Ashford Town last week.

Walker is happy with his side's progress during the summer, but believes there is more work to be done ahead of the coming campaign.

He said: "It is always nice to win games, but at this stage of the season results are not important. Fitness is the most important thing but looking at the games so far, we do need to work more on our forward options."

Despite missing all of Maidstone's pre-season games through injury, striker Meshach Nugent should be fit in time for the first game of the new Ryman Premier League season against Carshalton Athletic.

Maidstone are in action this Saturday with a friendly at Winchester City.

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